COUNTERPOINT SIMPLIFIED

FRANCIS L. YORK

Jessie Morehouse
94 Lincoln Ave.

A TEXT-BOOK IN SIMPLE
STRICT COUNTERPOINT

COUNTERPOINT SIMPLIFIED

BY

FRANCIS L. YORK, M. A.

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C-A

PREFACE.

THE author of the present little treatise does not lay claim to the discovery of any new principles in Counterpoint. In the nature of the case there can be none. All he hopes to have done is to have put the old well-known principles of Strict Counterpoint in as convenient and as concise a form as possible.

All reference to the C-clef has been intentionally omitted; while not denying the value of its use nor unduly exaggerating the difficulty of learning it, the author is convinced that more students will secure a general knowledge of Counterpoint and that those who commence its study will go farther without the use of the C-clef than with it. The present treatise is intended for the average student of music who feels that he ought to know in a practical way what is meant by Counterpoint, and be able to think music along the lines of voice progression rather than harmonic progression, and at least partially to understand the principles of composition that underlie the works of the great masters of polyphonic writing. For such students detail is worse than useless.

The author is well aware that many of the progressions forbidden in the chapters on Strict Counterpoint are allowable under certain circumstances. The line of demarkation between Strict Counterpoint and Free or Modern Counterpoint is not well defined In speaking of Strict Counterpoint it has been thought best in case of doubt to lean rather toward the strictest usage than to allow so-called licenses to creep in. Such licenses, however good in themselves, belong rather to Composers' Counterpoint, and if mentioned in a school text-book, tend to confuse the mind of the student.

The examples are all taken from standard authorities and due credit given, except in the case of those that are unmarked. For the latter the author is responsible.

The author's best thanks are due to Prof. Frederic H. Pease of the Michigan State Normal College and to Mr. R. L. Dick of the Detroit Conservatory of Music for their valuable suggestions and criticisms. Among others the following works on Counterpoint have been used as references and due acknowledgment is hereby made.

"Counterpoint," by Fétis, Cherubini, MacFarren, Haupt, Richter, Prout, Bridge, Pearce. Saunders' Examples in Strict Counterpoint: Jadassohn, Ouseley, and Gladstone.

It is hoped that the two chapters on Free Counterpoint will give the student an idea of this connecting link between the old style and the new, and influence him to take up the study of composition in a more comprehensive way.

FRANCIS L. YORK.

DETROIT, *July 20, 1907.*

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COUNTERPOINT SIMPLIFIED.

INTRODUCTION.

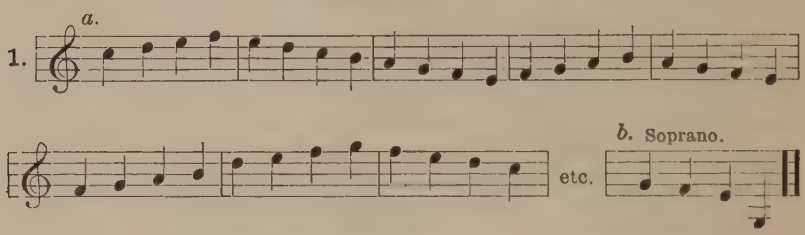
Counterpoint is the **art** of so **writing** two or more **melodies** that they may be satisfactorily performed **at the same time.** All weaving together of melodies, from the simplest combination of two simple themes to the most complex polyphony of a Wagner score is Counterpoint. But the study of **Strict Counterpoint** (our present object) resolves itself into **building one or more melodies upon a given melody.** The added melody or melodies may be **above or below** the given melody.

Counterpoint was the earliest form of artistic musical composition. It was the outgrowth of the simplest attempts of two singers to sing together without producing discordant effects. In Counterpoint then, we are primarily concerned with **the movement of voices** or **parts,** and the student should endeavor from the beginning to accustom himself to follow each part in its movement, to think, so to say, **horizontally,** instead of thinking as in Harmony, **perpendicularly.** It is to be remembered too, that **Counterpoint is primarily a series of consonances,** dissonances being introduced only under careful restrictions.

There are three most important principles to be observed in all writing of Counterpoint.

First, **the Principle of Variety,** by which is meant that the constant aim of the writer of Counterpoint is to **avoid monotony,** no matter from what cause it may arise. Thus broken chords and arpeggios as suggesting rather a single harmony than several melodic tones; voices moving a third or a sixth apart, by which one voice is merely a copy of the other; repetitions of figures; sequences, and nearly stationary parts are all undesirable.

Second, the **Principle of Clearness.** Nothing must be introduced which would tend to obscure the movement of each voice or confuse one voice with another voice, or to give the Counterpoint the effect of **aimless wandering.** Fig. 1*a*. Thus, crossing or overlapping of parts, voices moving out of their proper range (Fig. 1*b*), and formless melodies are all to be avoided.



Third, the **Principle of Euphony.** One important function of music is to please the ear, and although the pleasure derived from fine Counterpoint is of a different character from that which we get from beautiful Harmony, still the composition must always be **well-sounding.**

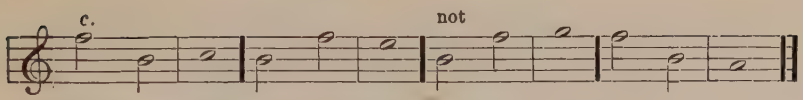
As **Counterpoint deals chiefly with melodies,** the student should **write** his Counterpoint **as if for voices,** keeping within the range of the voice for which he is writing and observing the following suggestions as to the progression of each voice or part.

Movement of a Single Voice.

The smoothest progression of a voice is always **by degrees,** i. e., step-wise progression; but movement by a skip of a major or minor third, perfect 4th, perfect 5th, minor 6th, or octave is good.* A skip of a diminished 4th, or diminished 5th, or of a major 6th **is rare.** Most **chromatic** intervals, most **diminished** intervals, all **augmented** intervals, all **7ths** and all intervals **greater than an octave are forbidden.**

The **diminished fifth is used,** but only when the part returns **within the interval** by degrees. This is to be used but sparingly. As, Fig. 1*c*.

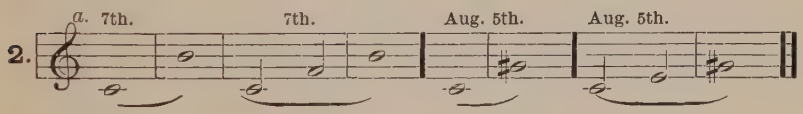
* The leap of the octave on the leading tone, Te, is forbidden.



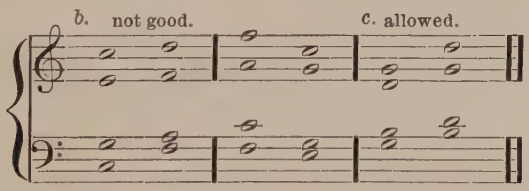
The **compass** of each part should rarely exceed **an octave and a fourth.**

No note should be repeated. (**Principle of Variety.**)

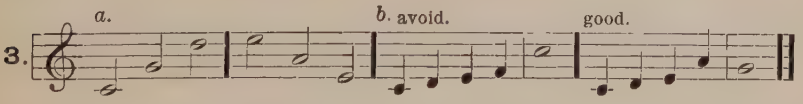
A forbidden melodic progression is not bettered by taking it in two leaps as, C–b, c–f–b; c–g♯, c–e–g♯.



All the parts should not move in the **same direction** at once, unless such progression is brought about by a re-distribution of the same chord. Fig. 2*c*.



As a rule, **two leaps in the same direction should not be used.** Fig. 3*a*.



After progressing by degrees **do not leap** in the same direction **to an accented tone.** (Fig. 3*b*.)

Harmonic Suggestions.

Although in Counterpoint, our attention is taken up rather by intervals and melodic progressions than by chords, still many points are made clearer by referring to chords and chord progressions.

There are but two classes of chords possible in Counterpoint:

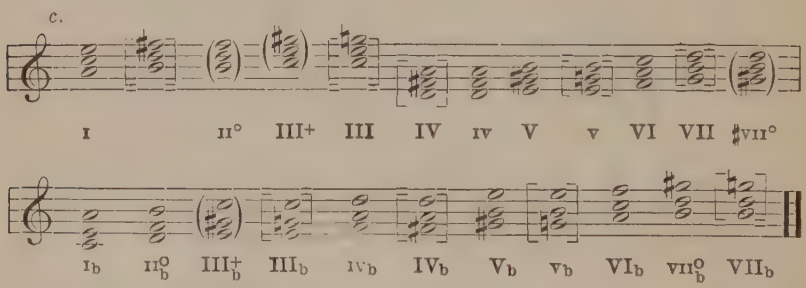
1st. **The consonant triads** (major or minor, **not** diminished) **with root** in the **lowest** part (uninverted or **a** position).

2d. The major, minor and diminished **triads with the third** in the **lowest** part (first inversion, **b** position or 6–3 chord).

The VII°_{a} (on the leading tone), is **never** used and III_{a} (the mediant with root lowest) is to **be avoided.**

The c position ($\frac{6}{4}$) of any chord **is absolutely forbidden.**

This gives us for use the I_{a} and I_{b}; II_{a} and II_{b}: III_{b} only, IV_{a} and IV_{b}, V_{a} and V_{b}; VI_{a} and VI_{b} and VII°_{b} **only.** Owing to the variable character of the scale, it is more difficult to determine the harmonies to be used in the minor mode. The chords that are possible are given in the following Figure. Those enclosed in parentheses are not to be used. Those in brackets are possible. The others are those ordinarily used. Other references to Harmony will be found in later chapters.



It is a fundamental idea in Counterpoint that but **one consonant effect** shall appear **in a measure.** This is most easily attained if we restrict ourselves to **one chord in a measure.** This will become plainer as the student progresses.

Modulation to the nearest major or minor keys **is allowed,** but modulations should not be frequent nor for many measures, nor to keys requiring the addition of more than one sharp or flat.

The **last note** in all kinds of Counterpoint must always represent an authentic cadence, i. e., the last note in the lowest part must **always** be the key-note. **The last note** in the upper voice is

usually the key-note: if not, it must be at any rate part of the tonic chord. **The complete cadence should occur only at the end.**

Little attention is paid to chord progression **as such,** it being possible theoretically for any chord to go to any other. However, the student will succeed best if he avoids moving any chord to any other whose root lies next in the scale, as e. g., II, I; V, IV; IV, III, etc. Such progressions are, however, much softened if the chords are in the b-position ($\frac{6}{3}$).

CHAPTER I.

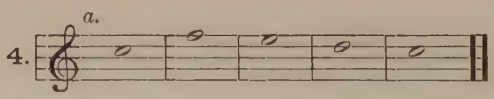
TWO-PART COUNTERPOINT. FIRST SPECIES.

Counterpoint may be written in **two, three or more parts,** but for the present, we shall confine our attention to Counterpoint written in **two parts.**

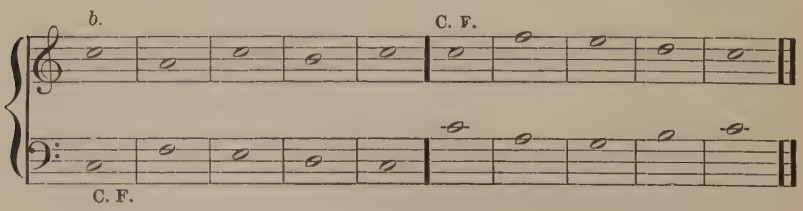
In writing **two-part Counterpoint, a melody is given** to the student **to which** he is **to fit another melody.** The first melody is generally short, written without change of key, entirely in whole notes and is called **Cantus Firmus** (Latin) or **Canto Fermo** (Italian). **This melody must never be altered by the student.**

The second melody (written to fit the first) is **the Counterpoint** and may be written in **five different ways,** each way being called a **Species of Counterpoint.** It is of course understood that each Species may also be written in three or more parts.

In the **First Species,** the Counterpoint is written **either above or below** the Cantus Firmus, in **notes of the same value as the Cantus Firmus.** If we take the following short melody as a Cantus Firmus,



we may write above and below it, the following Counterpoints.



The student will get the best results from his work if he will write the two parts **on separate staves** as above. The given part, (Cantus Firmus) should always be marked with the letters C. F. to

avoid confusion. The student is advised in submitting exercises to his teacher to write the Cantus Firmus in ink, the Counterpoint in pencil.

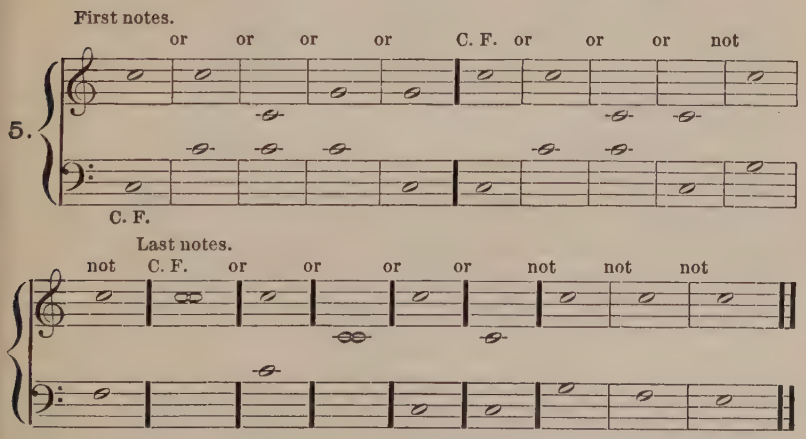
In adding the new melody (Counterpoint) to the Cantus Firmus only concords may be used. Dissonances of all kinds are forbidden. We may use then, major and minor thirds, perfect fifths, major and minor sixths, perfect octaves and unisons; no others. Thus the following intervals are all forbidden; seconds, fourths, sevenths, augmented and diminished intervals (including the augmented fourth Fah to Te and the diminished fifth Te to Fah).

The student should make special note that the fourth is regarded as a dissonance and is forbidden.

The first note of the Counterpoint must be a perfect concord, i. e., a perfect fifth, octave or unison.

If below the Cantus Firmus, it must be an octave or unison. If above, it may be an octave, unison or fifth.

The last interval is always an octave or unison. Fig. 5.

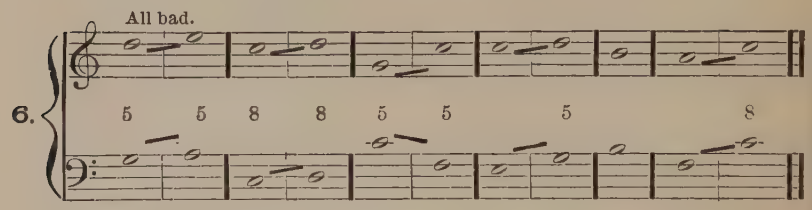


The student must distinguish clearly between the intervals that are usable as melodic intervals, i. e., by a single voice, and those that are allowed as harmonic intervals, i. e., the intervals formed by one voice with another.

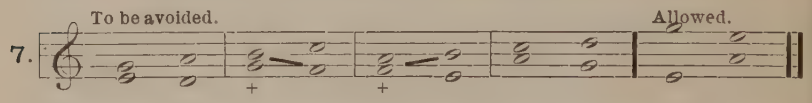
Parallel fifths and octaves are forbidden, also consecutive fifths and octaves **in contrary motion.**

The **octave** on the leading tone (Te) **is forbidden.**

Concealed fifths and octaves are forbidden.



The **unison** is used **only** in the **first** and **last measures.** Sixths and thirds are more desirable than fifths or octaves, but the best result is obtained by a judicious use of both. The progression of **a third to a fifth** when the parts move **by degrees is to be avoided.**

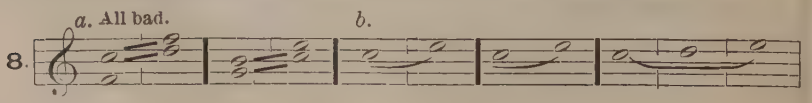


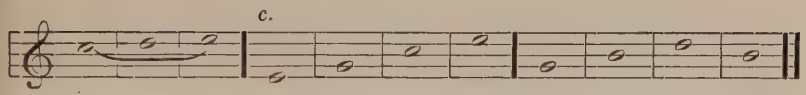
Measures 2 and 3 are especially bad as they contain the Tritone. See below. Page 9.

More than **three thirds** or **three sixths** should not be used consecutively. Two are better than three. **Contrary motion** is best but should be relieved by some parallel motion. (**Principle of Variety.**) **Oblique motion** requires one voice to remain stationary and is, therefore, **forbidden.** (**Principle of Variety.**)

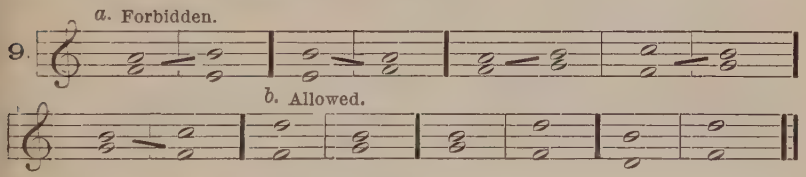
Parts should not cross, as this would produce confusion as to progressions. (**Principle of Clearness.**)

One voice should not **leap past** the tone just left by another voice. (**Principle of Clearness.**) Such movement is called **Overlapping** (Fig. 8*a*). Avoid repeating a melodic figure (Fig. 8*b*) or moving arpeggio-like as at Fig. 8*c* (**Principle of Variety**).

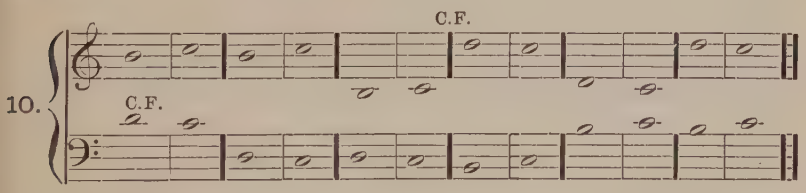




Any succession of chords, one of which contains the fourth of the scale, Fah, and the other the leading tone, Te (the **tritone**, i. e., the interval comprising three major seconds as F–G–A–B) is usually condemned by writers on Counterpoint (Fig. 9*a*) but **the bad effect of the tritone disappears if either or both parts move by a skip.** Fig. 9*b*. **(Principle of Euphony.)**



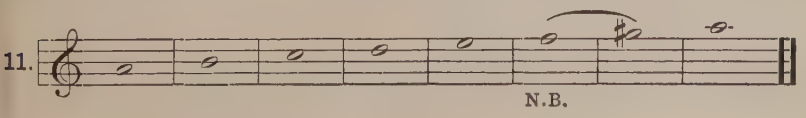
There is but one cadence possible. It is given in various forms in Fig. 10.



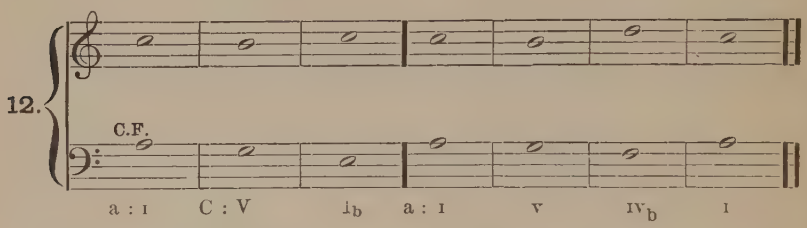
This cadence must occur **only at the end** of the exercise, not in the middle.

Te (the leading tone) **generally,** though not necessarily, **goes to Doh.** If approached from below it usually ascends, if from above, it may move in either direction.

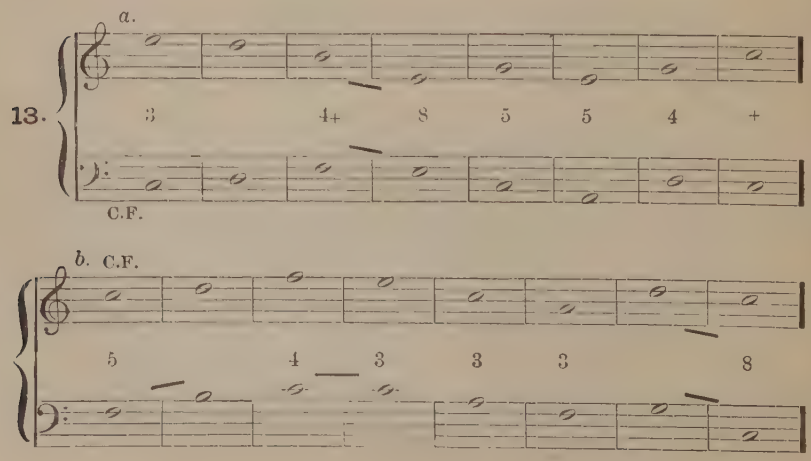
When writing **in the minor mode,** the tones of the **Harmonic Minor Scale** (only the 7th of the scale sharpened) had best be used, but the interval of **the augmented second must not occur.**



If the natural (minor) 7th occur in the Cantus Firmus, treat it as if it were the third of the minor V or make a transition to the key of the relative major.



Exercise. As an exercise the student should write counterpoints both above and below several of the Cantus Fermi given on page 129, the number to be written and the Cantus to be selected is left to the instructor. It is suggested, however, that only by writing a large number of exercises, can the student become at all proficient. The following models should be thoroughly studied before any exercises are written. By playing them repeatedly and by noting carefully the progressions used, the student will begin to think contrapuntally and will appreciate the peculiar flavor that belongs to contrapuntal writing.



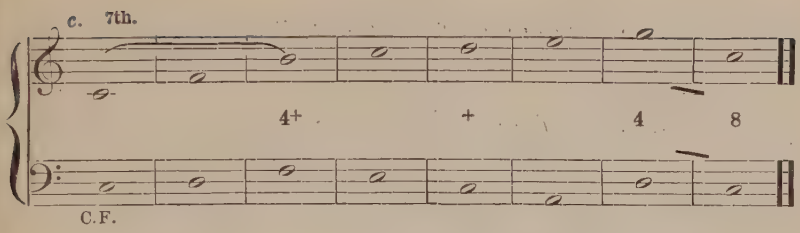
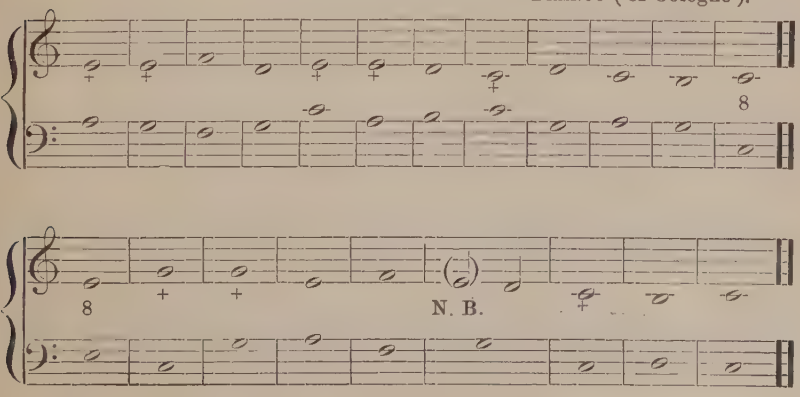


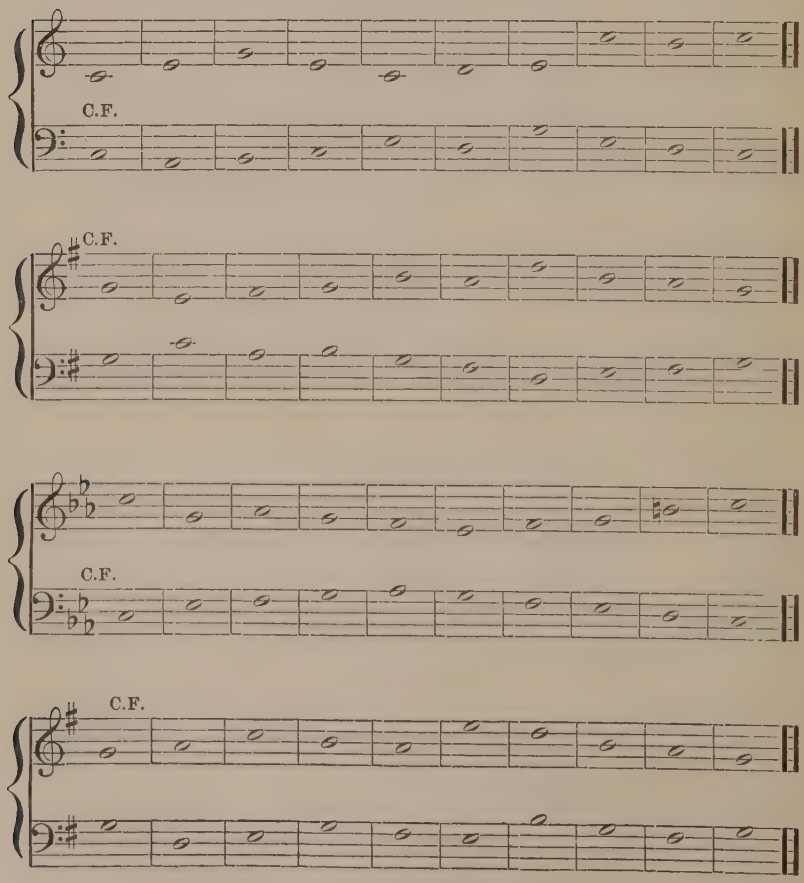
Fig. 13*a*, *b*, *c*, contains numerous errors. Fig. 13*a* begins with a third instead of a perfect concord, and ends without a proper cadence. In the bass of Fig. 13*b*, the melodic interval of the augmented fourth, and the stationary c–c is bad. In Fig. 13*c*, the soprano progression of a major seventh by two leaps, the augmented fourth, the dissonance in measure five are all bad. The other errors are easily seen.

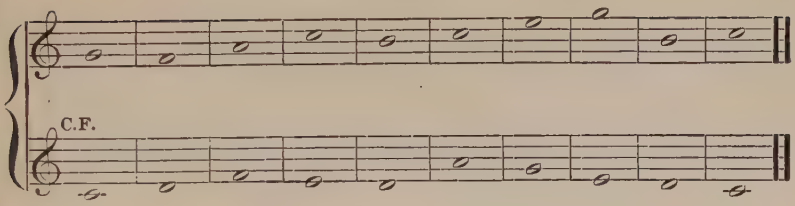
NOTE. In the Model Exercises given throughout this book, many of them by acknowledged masters, there will frequently be found progressions differing from those recommended to the student. In many cases these have been marked. Such irregularities arise from several causes. Like all arts the art of Counterpoint was a slow growth, and at one time in its history progressions were forbidden that later on were found possible under certain circumstances. Different writers, too, have different ideas as to what is desirable. No art can be tied down to hard and fast rules. All that can be given the student is a general indication of what is usually best. In the Models, it is sufficient if he take note of the irregularities and avoid them for the present.

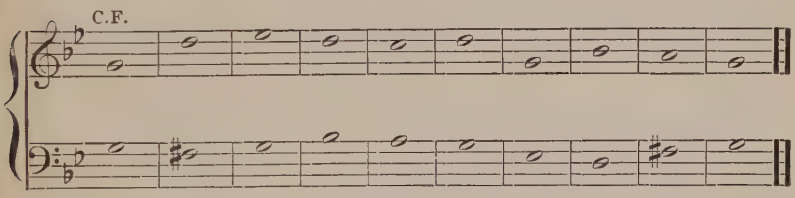
FRANCO (of Cologne).

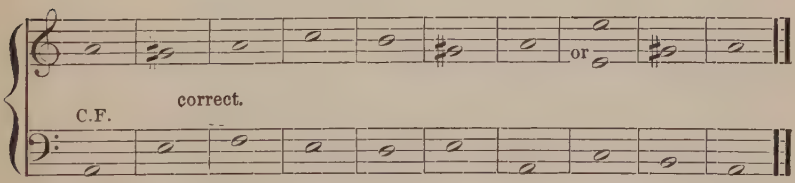


This bit of Counterpoint shows how far our rules were followed in actual composition by the old writers. The original, a chant written about A. D. 1200 contains notes of various lengths, here reduced throughout to whole notes. Notice the repeated notes, the change to the Second Species, and the concealed octave. The composition is divided into two parts, measures 1–12 and 13–21, hence the octaves, measures 12–13, are not considered, the two parts being regarded as distinct.

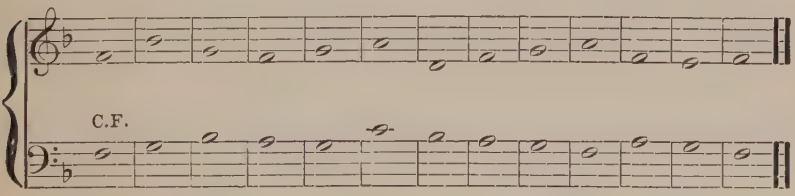


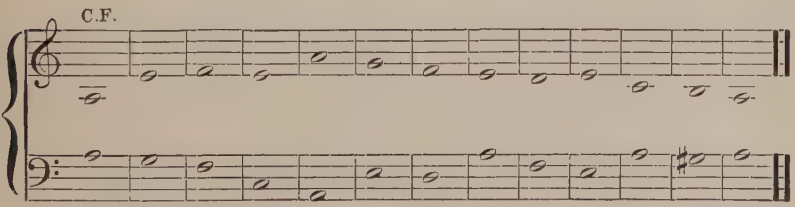


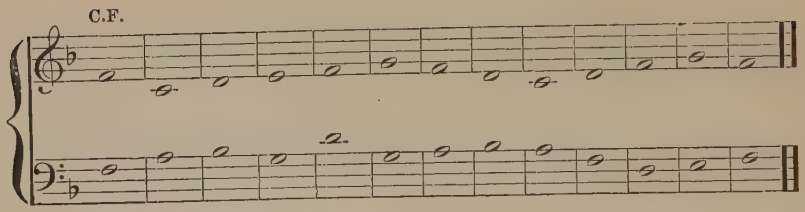




The succession of two major thirds which in the major mode results in the Tritone and is forbidden, is allowed in the minor mode as above, the interval from E to A being a **perfect** 4th.






C.F.

CHAPTER II.

TWO-PART COUNTERPOINT. SECOND SPECIES.

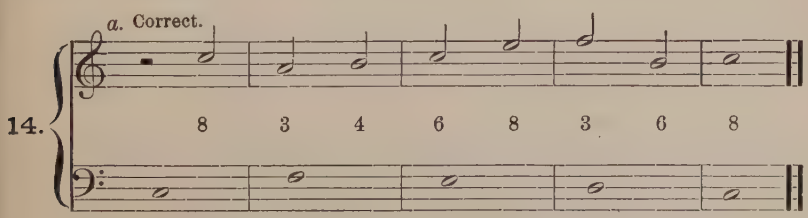
In **the Second Species,** the Counterpoint has **two notes against each one** in the Cantus Firmus. Thus when written against a Cantus Firmus in whole notes, the Counterpoint will be in half notes. The last note of the Counterpoint, however, **must be a whole note.**

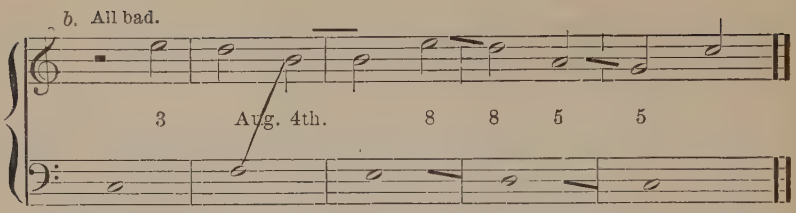
It is possible and even **preferable** to begin the Counterpoint **with a half rest,** giving but one half note to the first measure (**Principle of Clearness**). The **first note** of the Counterpoint, whether on the first or on the second half of the measure, **must be a perfect concord** as in the First Species, i. e., unison or octave if the Counterpoint is below; unison, fifth or octave if the Counterpoint is above.

The **first note** of each following measure is governed by the same rules as in the First Species, i. e., we must have **only consonances;** thirds, sixths, octaves or fifths.

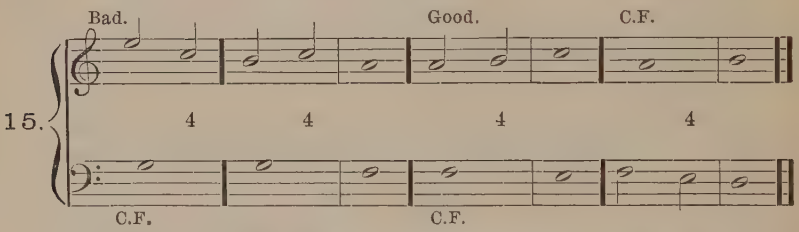
The **second note** in each measure **may be either a consonance or a dissonance.** If a consonance, it may be approached or left by a skip. **If a dissonance, it must be approached and left by degrees,** i. e., it may be a **passing tone** and, if so, **must follow the rules for passing tones.** A dissonance on the second half of the measure is more desirable than a consonance.

A leap is better between the two notes of the measure than between the last note of one measure and the first note of the following measure. Fig. 14.

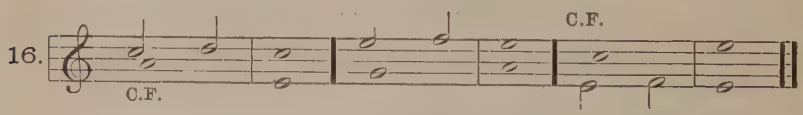




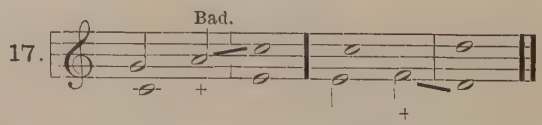
Since **a fourth is regarded** in Counterpoint **as a dissonance,** the student must be careful not to approach or leave it by a skip.



The variety of passing tone sometimes called **changing tone** is available for use. A changing tone is a dissonant tone that fulfills all the conditions of a passing tone but returns to the tone from which it started instead of moving on in the same direction. There is also another variety of changing tone described on page 30.



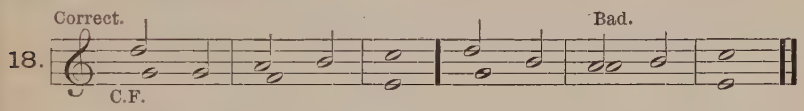
As but one chord is to be used in a measure, we **must not** attempt to use as consonant tones in the same measure, **two tones which cannot belong to the same chord.**



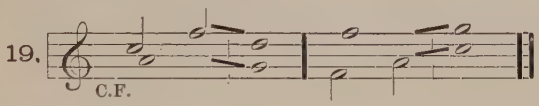
Here G and A, first measure, although both consonant with C, cannot both belong to the same harmony; **hence A must be regarded as dissonant** to the prevailing harmony of the measure and

be regarded as a dissonant tone. For this reason its progression should be stepwise. The same applies to the notes E and F in the third measure.

The **unison** should be avoided in the first half of the measure (except in first and last measures) but it may rarely be used on the second half of the measure.



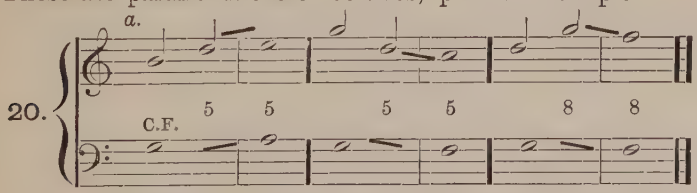
Concealed fifths or octaves are forbidden, or in other words two voices must not take a fifth or an octave in parallel motion. In the Second Species this can only occur between the second half of one measure and the first half of the next.



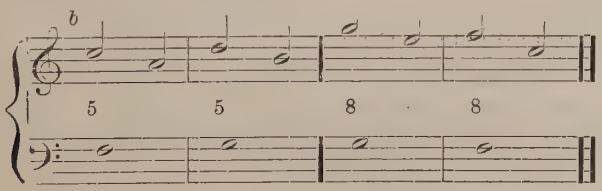
Students always are in doubt as to what progressions constitute parallel fifths or octaves in this species. The following rules will be of use in determining what is bad.

1. **Parallel fifths or octaves** must not occur between the **second note** of one measure and the first note of the next measure.

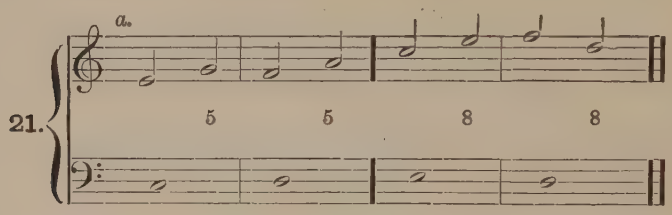
These are parallel fifths or octaves, pure and simple.



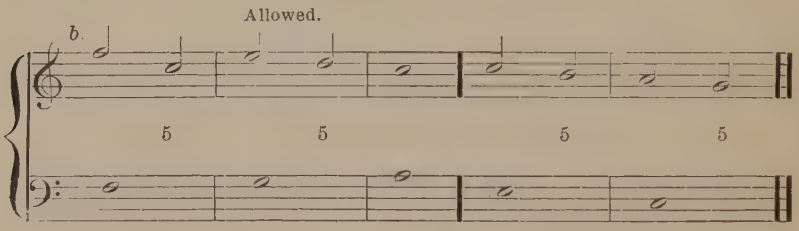
2. **Parallel fifths or octaves** must not occur **between the first notes of consecutive** measures.



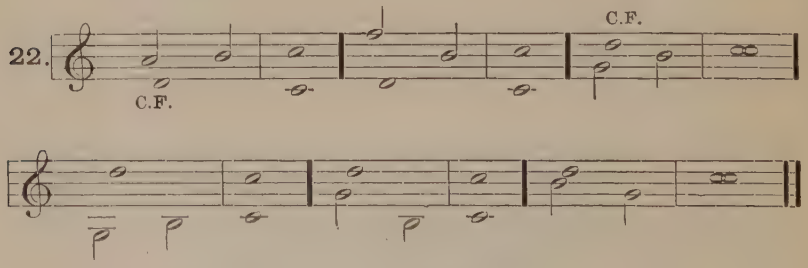
3. **Parallel fifths or octaves** must not occur between the **second notes of consecutive** measures.



This rule is sometimes relaxed if either of these notes is not an harmonic tone but merely a **passing tone.**



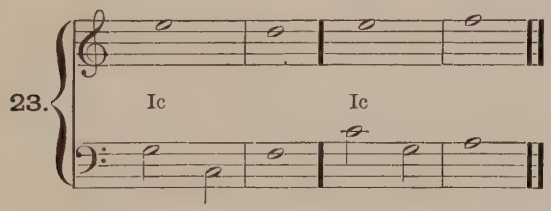
The **Cadences** used in the Second Species, two-voiced Counterpoint, are as follows:



There are no others possible.

Cantus Firmi are sometimes written in which the penultimate note is some other than **Ray,** (the second of the scale). This would give rise to various other cadences, but the present treatise does not include such Cantus Firmi.

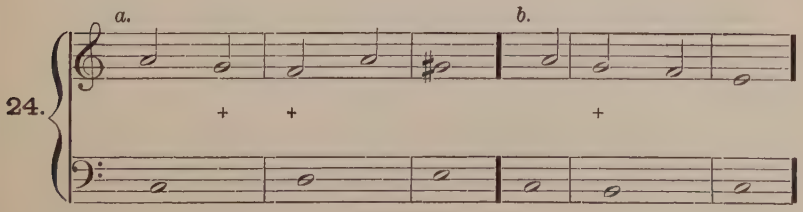
As the interval of **the fourth is** regarded as **a dissonance** in Counterpoint, it is not possible to use a chord whose two lower notes form that interval; i. e., **a chord in the C-position ($^{6}_{4}$) chord) is forbidden.** Although in two-voiced Counterpoint we cannot form a complete chord, still we can imply one,

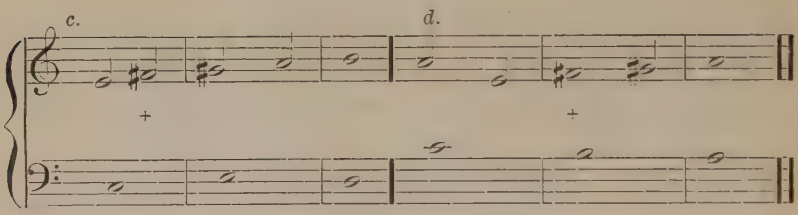


and when the implied chord is a C-position chord as in Fig. 23, the progression should be avoided. In Fig. 23, if the first chord is regarded as **a I** chord, the bass note gives us the fifth in the bass which is forbidden. If we regard the chord as a III_b ($^{6}_{3}$ chord) the second bass note is a dissonance taken by a skip, also forbidden.

The same rules hold good when writing Counterpoint in the minor mode, but the following additional suggestions should be observed.

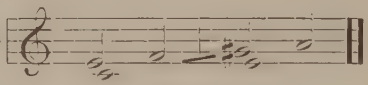
The seventh of the scale should be a minor second from the key-note. However, when used **as a passing tone** progressing **downward**, it may appear at the distance of a major second, Fig. 24*a*, or, in step-wise progression, it may even be used as an harmonic tone, as in Fig. 24*b*.





The sixth of the scale is a minor sixth when used as an Harmonic tone. Fig. 24*a*. As a passing tone it may be a major sixth. Fig. 24*c*. It is also possible to use the major sixth in the cadence as at Fig. 24*d*.

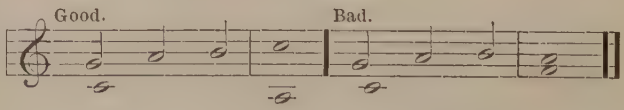
The use of the **augmented second** from the minor sixth to the major seventh is of course **forbidden.**

25. 

Counterpoint of the Second Species is sometimes written with **three notes to a measure** instead of two.

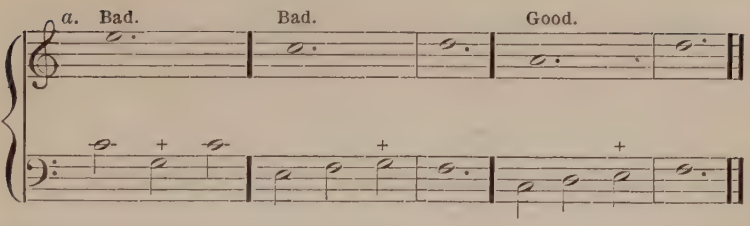
There are but few modifications of the previous rules that need to be observed in this kind of writing. The last measure of the Counterpoint should contain a note of equal value to the note in the Cantus Firmus. The first measure should usually begin with a rest and in any case the first note must be a perfect concord.

The second and third notes may both be passing tones, but, if so, both **must move onward by degrees in the direction in which they start.**

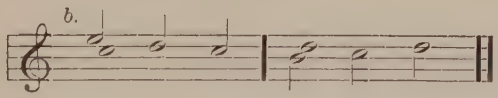
26. 

When the Counterpoint is below **do not use the fifth** of the chord as either **highest** or lowest note in the measure, unless it is treated as a passing tone.

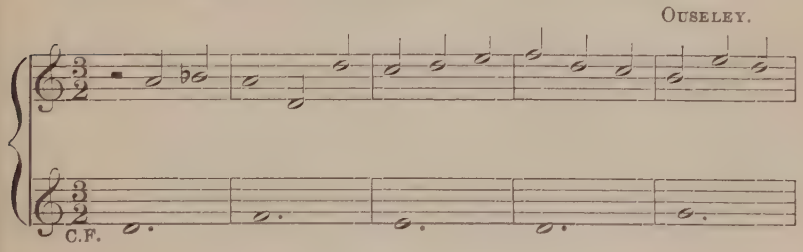
27.

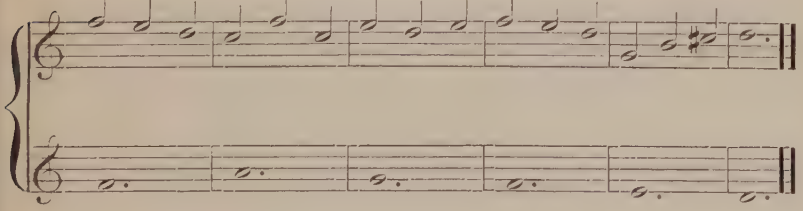


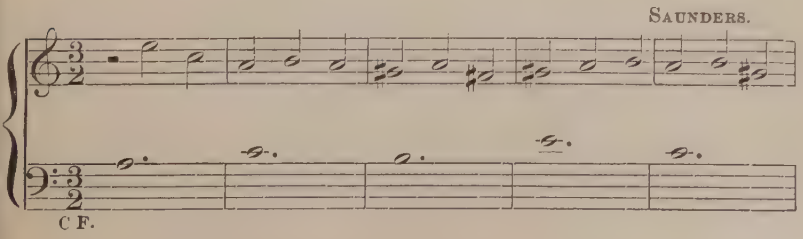
Oblique motion to a unison is bad.

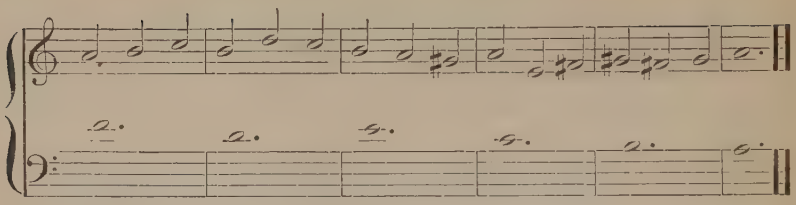


The following are two illustrations of three notes to one.



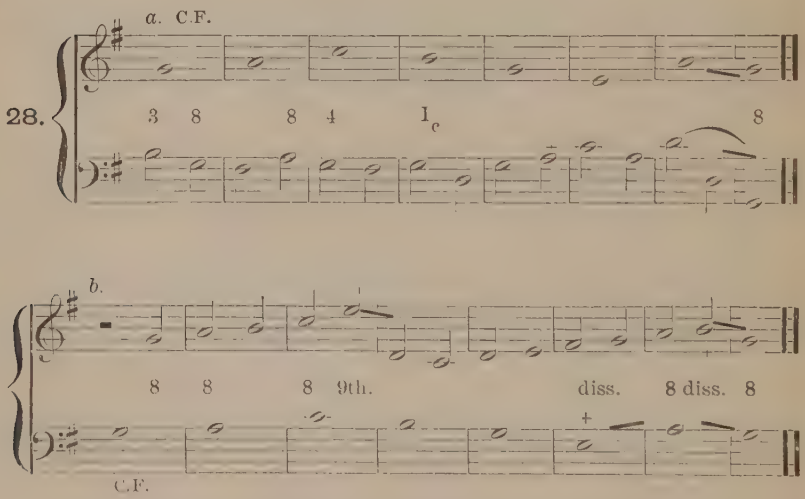




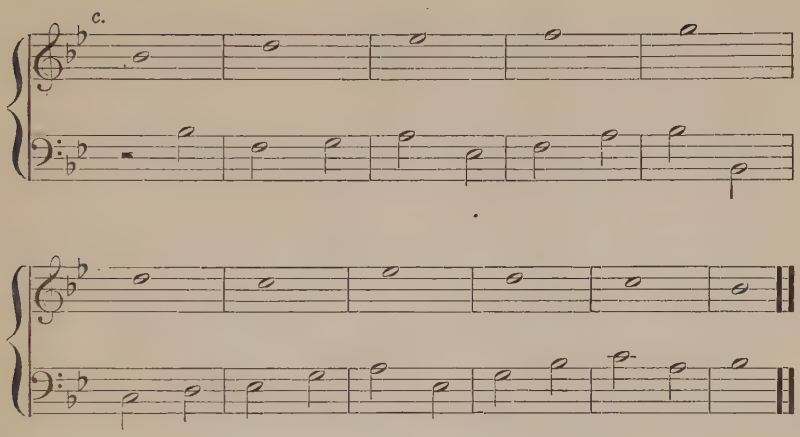


The student is advised not to write Counterpoint of this kind until he has written Counterpoint of the Third Species.

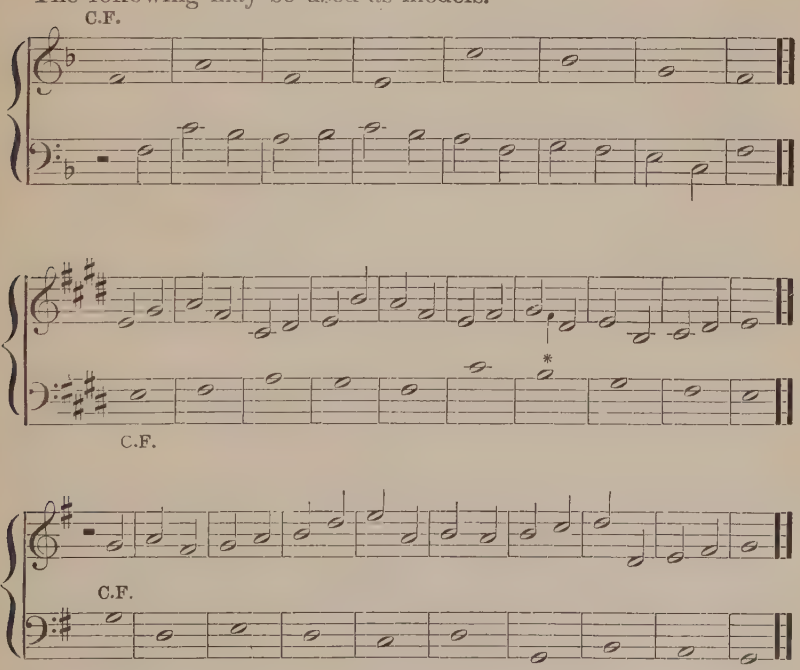
The student should write under the direction of his teacher many examples of the Second Species of Counterpoint. The following will show both what to avoid and what to imitate.



In Fig 28*a* first measure, the counterpoint should not begin with the third in the Bass. In measure 4, a C-position chord is outlined. In measure 5, the dissonance is left by a skip. The Bass progression in the last two measures is very bad. In Fig. 28*b* the errors are explained by the marks. In Fig. 28*c* the student should find and correct the numerous errors.

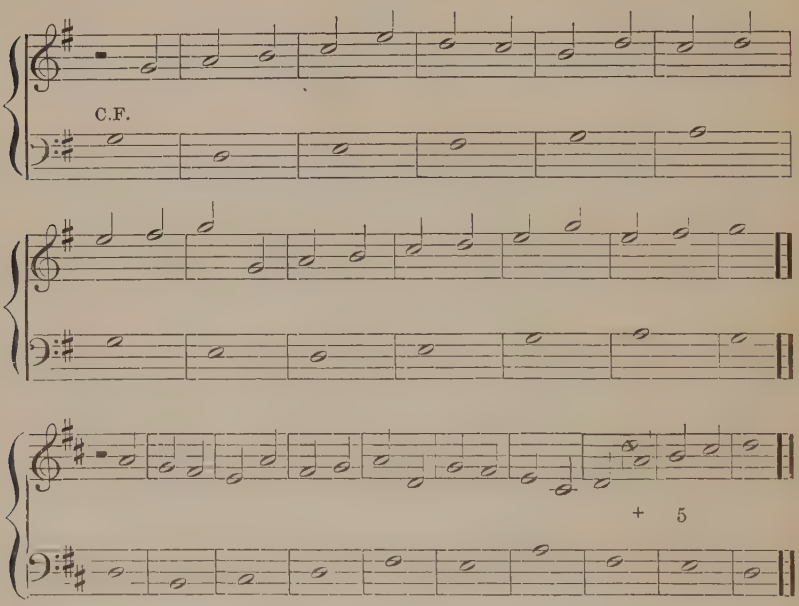


The following may be used as models.

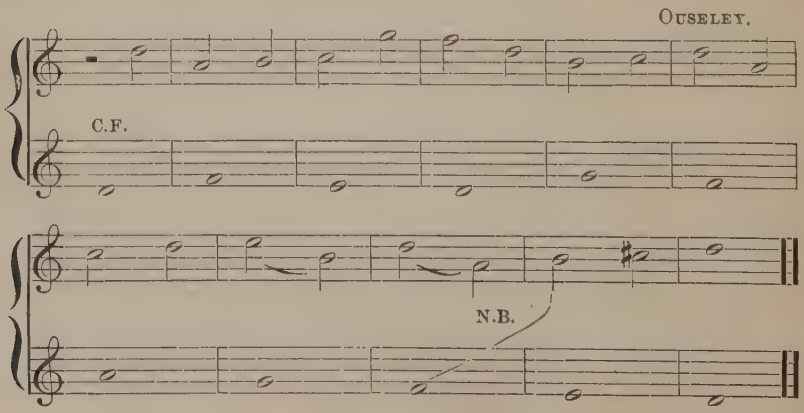


* F♯ is better than D♯, as the latter gives two progressions of 4ths. Principle of Variety.

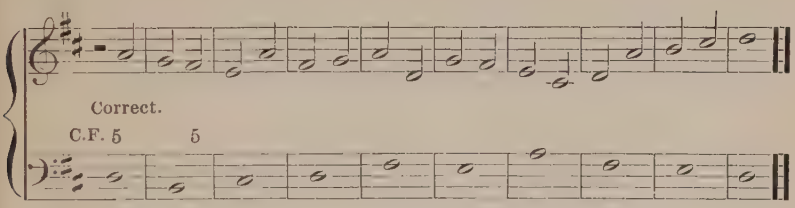
The voices would combine better if the Soprano were an 8ve lower or the Bass an 8ve higher. The same observation applies to the following:



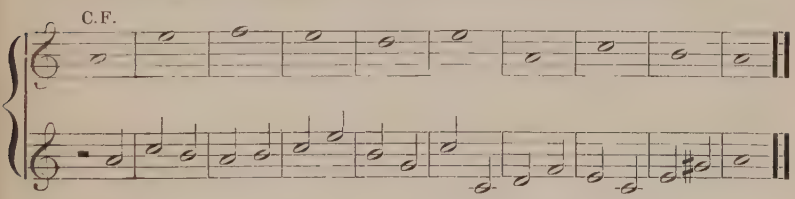
The D in measure 8 would have made a concealed 5th with the next note. Hence the correction.

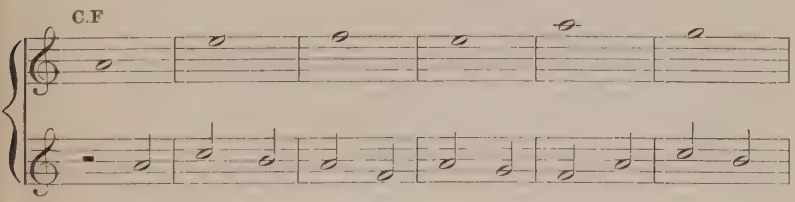


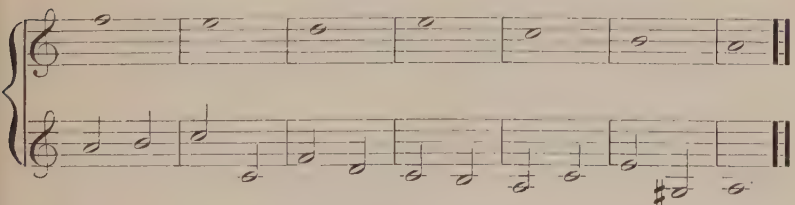
The two melodic 4ths and the tritone are not to be recommended.

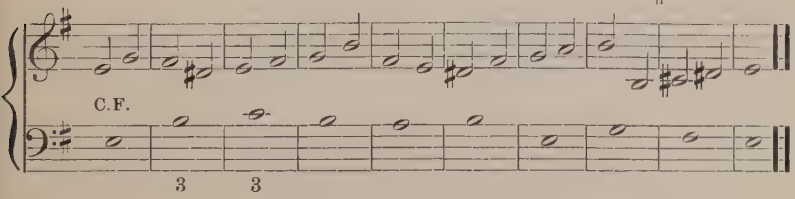


The fifths are allowable since the second is a passing tone.

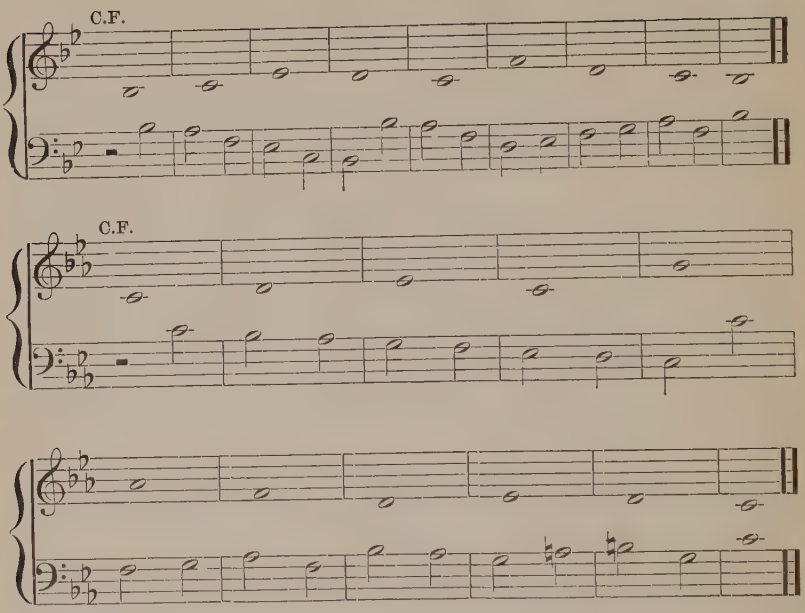








The two major thirds are allowed as no tritone results.



This counterpoint is rather in E♭ than in C minor.

CHAPTER III.

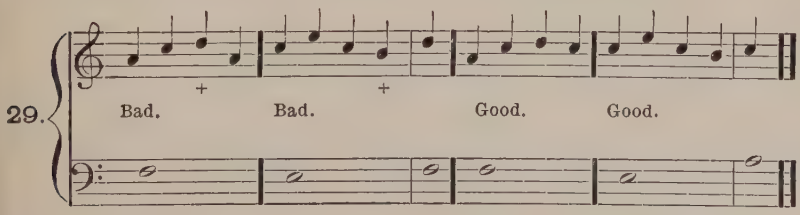
TWO-PART COUNTERPOINT. THIRD SPECIES.

In the **Third Species, four notes** are written in the Counterpoint **to one** in the Cantus Firmus. The last measure will of course contain but one note and that of equal value to the note in the Cantus Firmus.

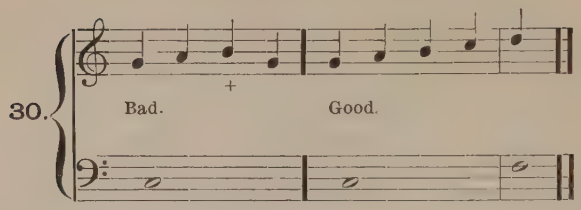
As in the First and Second Species, **the first note** of the Counterpoint, **must be a perfect concord** (unison or octave if the Counterpoint is below; unison, fifth or octave if the Counterpoint is above).

The first measure may begin with **a quarter rest.** In fact, **in all species** of Counterpoint, except the First, **the Counterpoint is likely to begin with a rest,** as this gives more piquancy to the Counterpoint and distinguishes it more completely from the Cantus Firmus. (**Principles of Variety and of Clearness**).

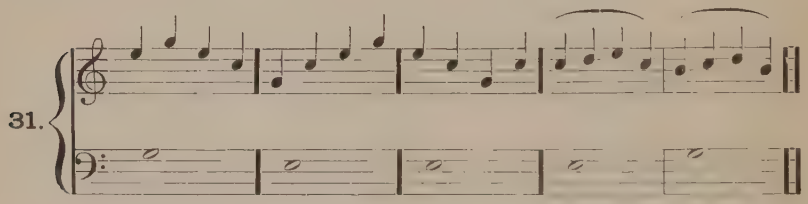
The **first note** of every following measure **must be a concord. The other three notes may be** either **concords or passing tones** but it is best to have at least one passing tone in each measure. If **concords,** they **are free to move by skips.** If **passing tones,** they **must move by degrees.** As in the Second Species, a note may be a concord with the Cantus Firmus and still be dissonant to the prevailing harmony. Hence, such a note must not move by skip.



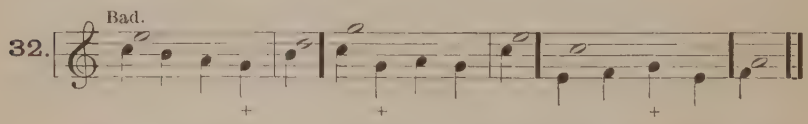
If two **passing tones follow each other** their progression is just as strictly by degrees.



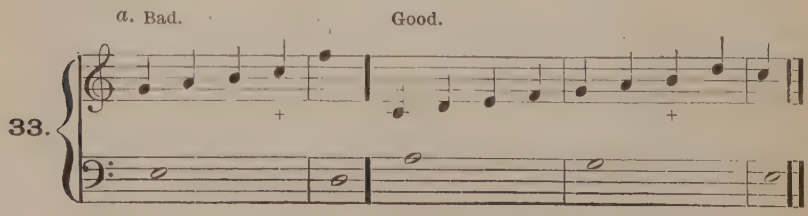
Avoid forming arpeggio or broken chord groups, or repetitions of a figure.



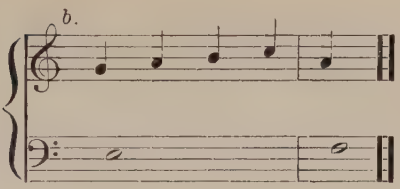
Avoid any succession of tones that would seem to define a C-position ($\frac{6}{4}$) chord. If when writing the lower part, the student will **avoid placing the fifth** of the chord **as the highest or lowest note** of the measure, he will have little trouble with the C-position chords.



After a progression by degrees, do not skip in the same direction to an accented note.

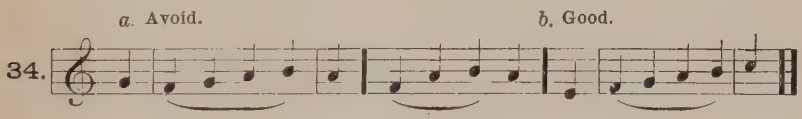


A skip in contrary motion is good.



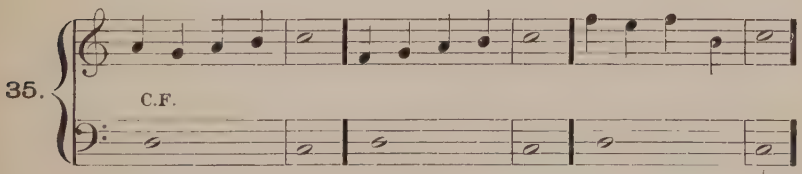
Any bad effect of consecutives will be entirely avoided if we take care to place **at least four notes between any two fifths or any two octaves.** More freedom is allowed if one or both notes are passing notes.

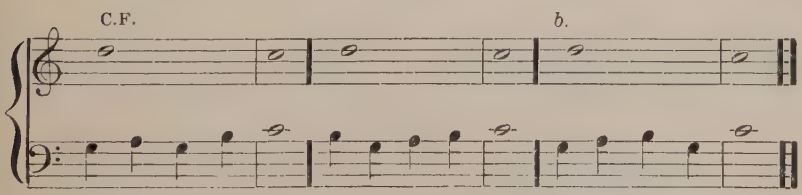
No figure should be allowed to **begin and end with the notes of the tritone,** or even to be defined by them. Fig. 34*b* is good because the figure, although containing the tritone, does not have the notes of the tritone as outside notes.



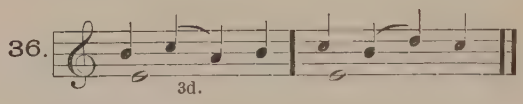
In the cadence, **the penultimate note** should always be the **leading tone,** except that the cadence at Fig. 35*b* is allowed.

The best **cadences** are :

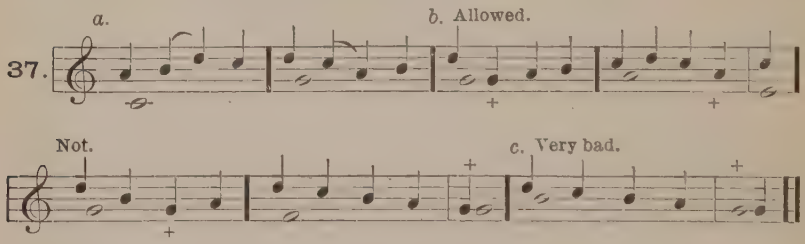




Sometimes a dissonant (passing) tone instead of moving onward by a degree, leaps the interval of a third, the part then returning to the note over which the leap was made; as Fig. 36.



Such use is also called a **changing note,** (see Chapter II, page 16, Fig. 16) the voice simply changing about but making no **progress.** The form given above (Fig. 36) in which the last note of the group is the same as the first, is better than the following, Fig. 37*a*, though either may be used.

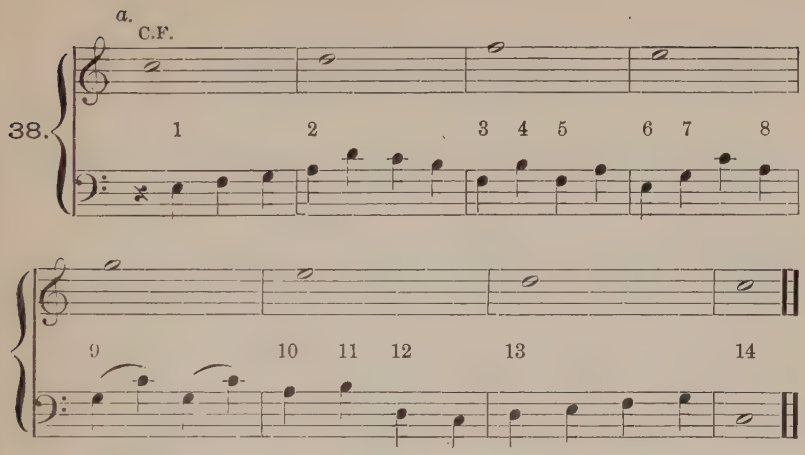


As in the former species, the **voices should not overlap,** (**Principle of Clearness**) nor may a note be **repeated.** It is best too, that the voices **do not cross** though this is sometimes allowed. (**Principle of Clearness.**)

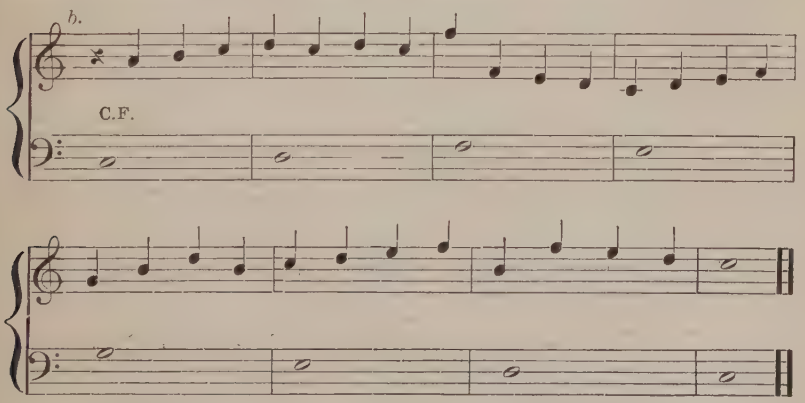
The unison may occur as the first or the last note of the Counterpoint but elsewhere it should not appear on either the primary or secondary accent (first or third note of the measure) Fig. 37*b*. It must not be taken by parallel motion. Fig. 37*c*.

Six, eight and nine notes may also be written to the measure in this species but no new rules are needed. It is recommended that the student now return to Chapter II and write a number of Counterpoints with three notes against one.

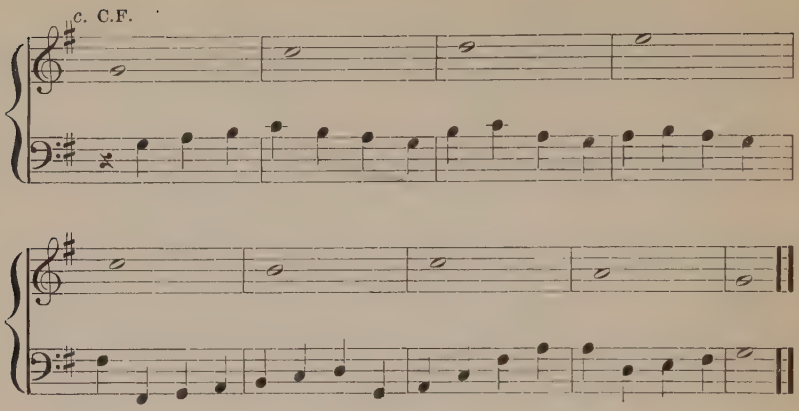
The next three illustrations show many things that are to be avoided. The illustrations following are intended as models.



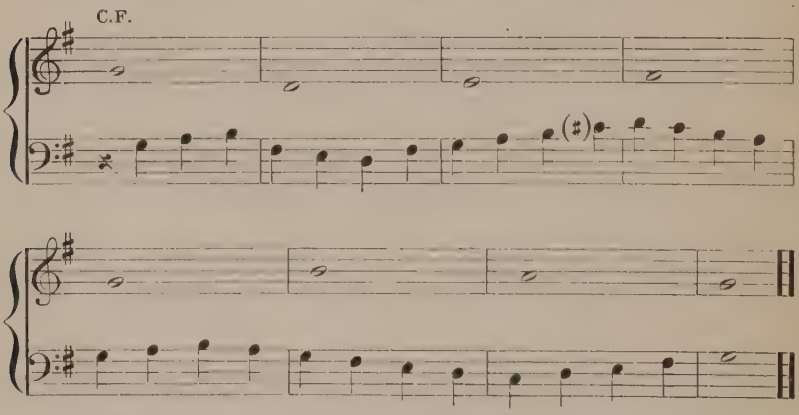
1. Imperfect interval in bass. 2. Dissonance on the accent. 3. Skip in same direction after step-wise progression, also aug. 4th. 4. Dissonance left by skip. 5. Leap of aug. 4th. 6. Concealed 8ve. 7. Implied C-position (this is allowed by some writers). 8. Dissonance by a skip. 9. I_c and repeated figure. 10. Parallel 5ths. 11. Dissonance left by skip. 12. Dissonance taken by a skip. 13–14 and 6–9 octaves on accent.



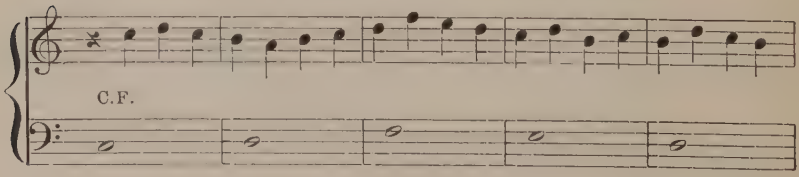
Let the student discover and correct the errors in the above. Also in the following.

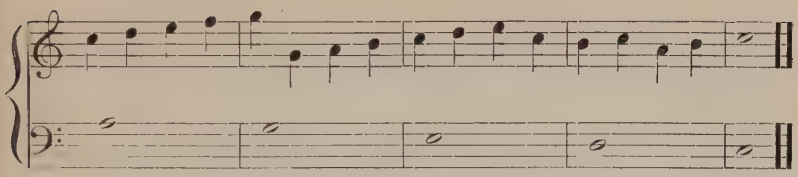


As an Exercise, the student should write many examples of Counterpoint in this Species, both above and below, as the teacher may direct, choosing his Canti from those on pages 129, 130, 131.

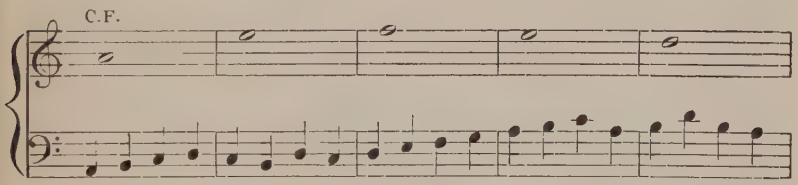


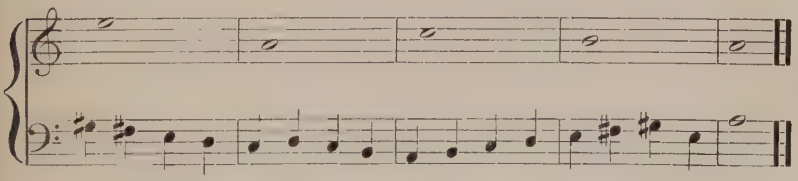
The C♯ is smoother than the C♮ in the third measure.

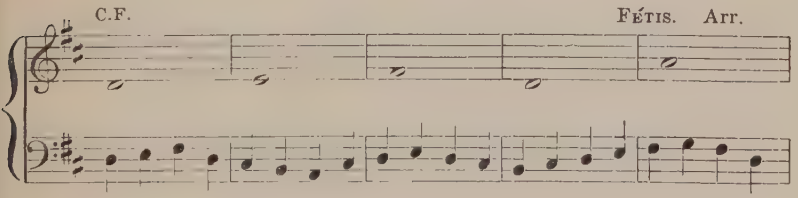


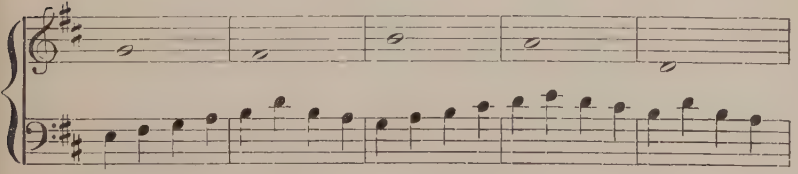


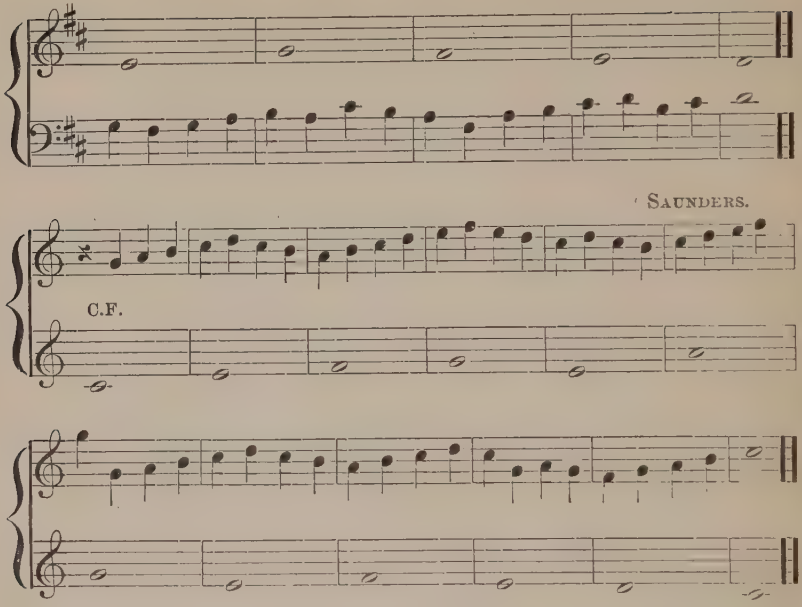
In the following, 6th measure, G♮ and F♮ are possible but would suggest C : I_c. The G♯ emphasizes the key of a minor. If the G♯ is used the F♯ is a necessity. Why?



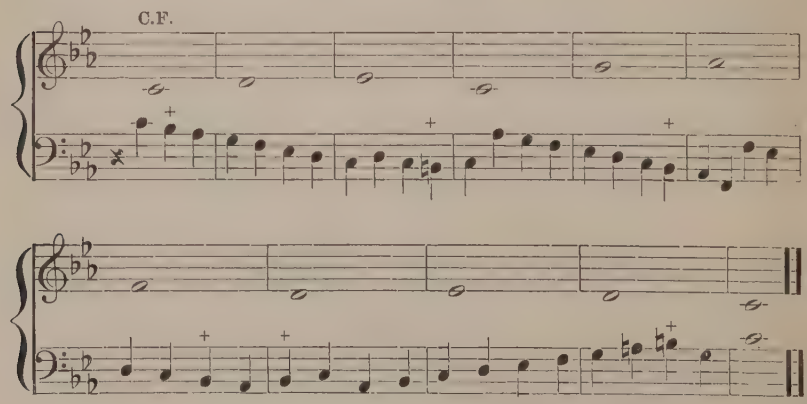


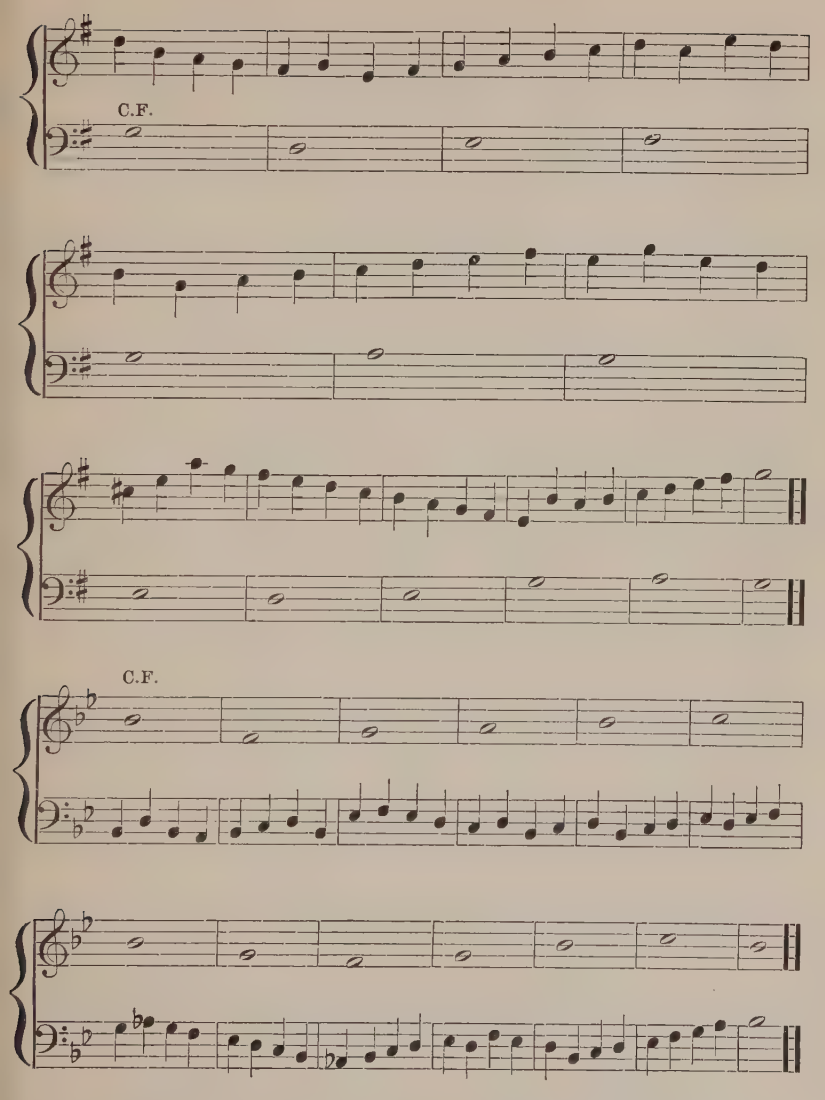




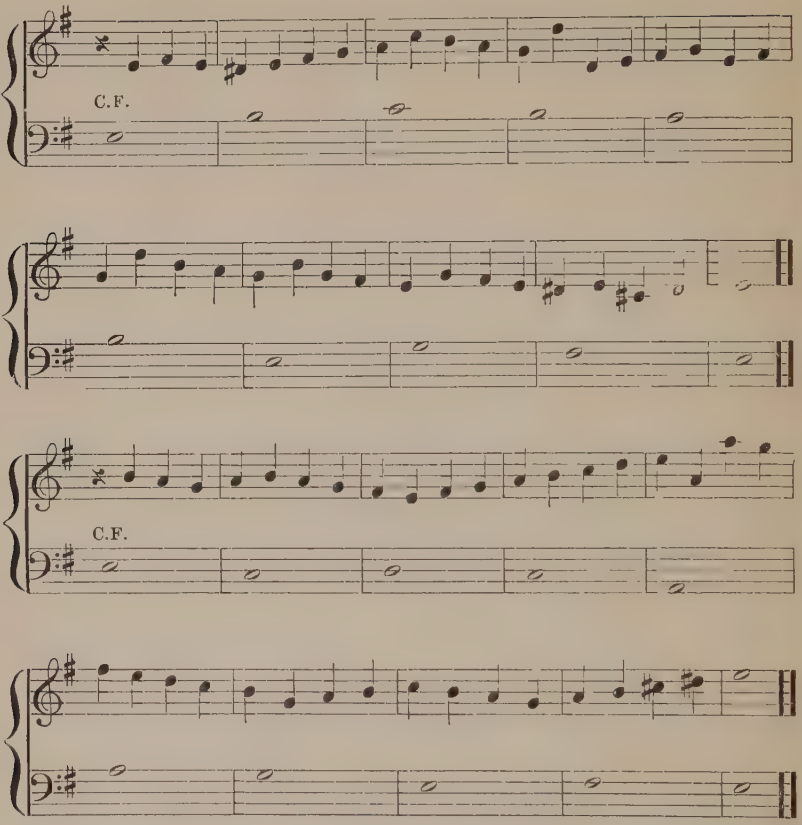


The following illustrates the use of the major and the minor seventh in the minor mode. In the first measure B♮ would be bad. In measure 3 as a changing tone B♮ is much the better. At the end B♮ is necessary for a cadence.





A♮ in measure 7 would be very rough, and the transition to the key of E♭ adds interest. The cadence is irregular but good owing to the strong progression of the Bass.

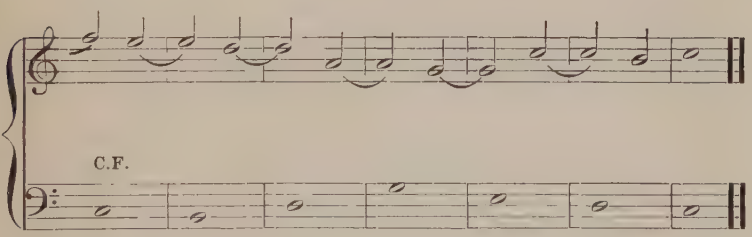

C.F.
C.F.

CHAPTER IV.

TWO-PART COUNTERPOINT. FOURTH SPECIES.

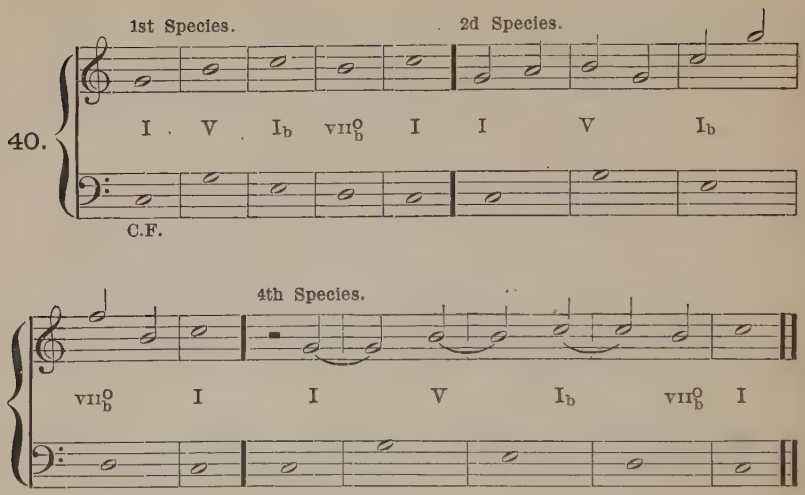
In this Species, we again have **note against note** but with the very important difference that instead of the tones appearing at the same time, i. e. struck together, each tone in **the Counterpoint appears on the second half** of the tone in the Cantus Firmus. By this means with the same number of notes as in the First Species, we have twice the **rhythmical variety.** The note in the **Counterpoint** thus coming on the second half of the measure, is written as a half note and tied to another **half note on the first part** of the following measure. Thus;

39.



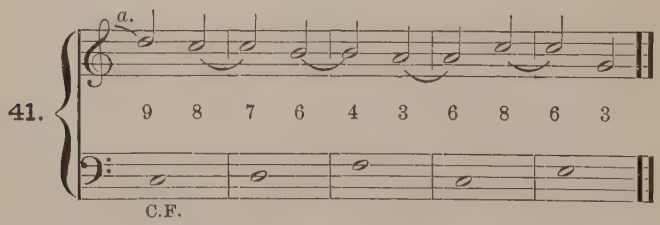
Such notes are said to be **syncopated. Syncopation,** then, is **the prolongation of an unaccented** note **into an accented note.**

The **first half of the note** in the Counterpoint **must** always **be consonant** with the Cantus Firmus; that is the **second half of each measure must be consonant.** The student will notice that this reverses the method employed in writing in the Second Species where the **first half of each measure** is consonant. In the Second Species, the **first half** of the measure defines the Harmony. In the Fourth Species, the **second half** of the measure defines the Harmony.



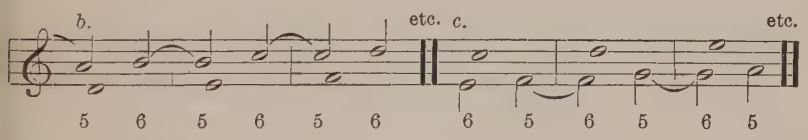
The ninth measure of Fig. 40 though correct is not to be especially recommended.

If the note of the Counterpoint thus tied over (suspended) is dissonant with the note in the Cantus Firmus when the latter enters, it is called **a suspension,** and it **must resolve by a degree** to a consonance on the second half of the measure. If the note of the Counterpoint **forms a consonance** on the first of the measure, **it is free to progress by a skip.** Thus ;



It will be seen by the above that **suspensions always resolve downwards one degree.** It is however, possible to use the interval of the fifth on the accent when followed by the sixth. In this case we may regard the fifth as a dissonance resolving upward

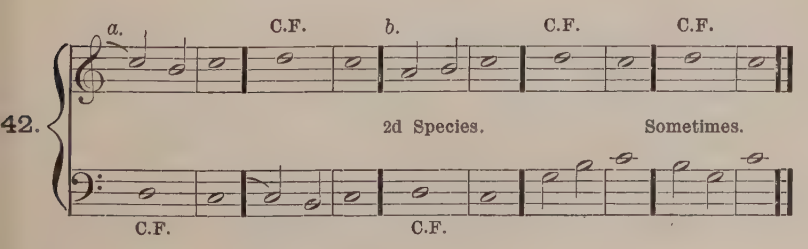
(sometimes called a **retardation**) or concede that two chords have been used in the measure contrary to the usual practice of Counterpoint. Thus in Fig. 41*b* the progressions are correct, the fifths coming on the unimportant part of the measure. In Fig. 41*c* they are wrong, as here they represent the Harmony. The student should always reduce Counterpoint of the Fourth Species to Counterpoint of the First Species to determine whether his progressions are correct. See Fig. 40.



The first measure of the Counterpoint generally **begins with a half rest,** though **two half notes** (making the first measure of the Second Species) **are allowed.** In either case, **the first note** of the Counterpoint **must be a perfect consonance;** octave, unison or fifth when above, octave or unison when below.

The last note, as in all kinds of Counterpoint, **must be of equal length** with the note in the Cantus Firmus and **must be a perfect consonance.**

In the Cadence the last note but one of the Counterpoint, must be the leading tone whether it is above or below. (Fig. 42*a*.) The last measure but one is often written in the **Second Species** in order to introduce the cadence properly. When this is done any of the cadences given in the Second Species may be used.



The consonances which form the second half of each measure (except first and last measure) must of course be those given in the First Species, i. e. unisons, thirds, fifths, sixths and octaves.

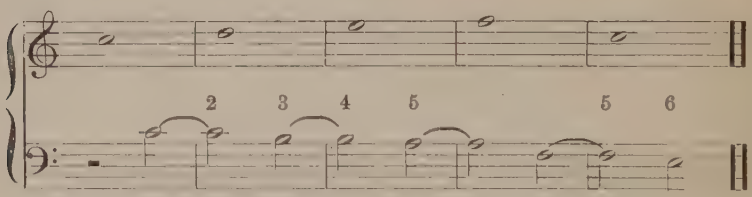
Counterpoint of this species will be more interesting if a majority of the measures contain a dissonance on the first half. (**Principle of Variety.**)

When the Counterpoint is above, the suspensions that may be used are :

Nine to eight, (never two to one) seven to six, four to three and rarely five to six. Of these seven to six is the best. See Fig. 41.

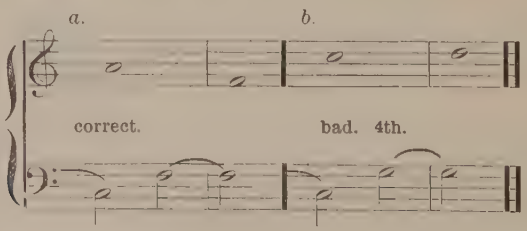
When the Counterpoint is below we may use two to three, four to five and five to six. Of these two to three is the best. Seven to eight is not allowed.

43.



The interval of the fourth must be treated strictly as a dissonance, but the following Fig. 44*a* is not regarded as a C-position ($\frac{6}{4}$) chord and may be used freely.

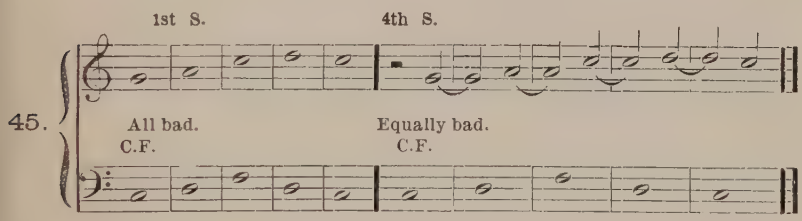
44.



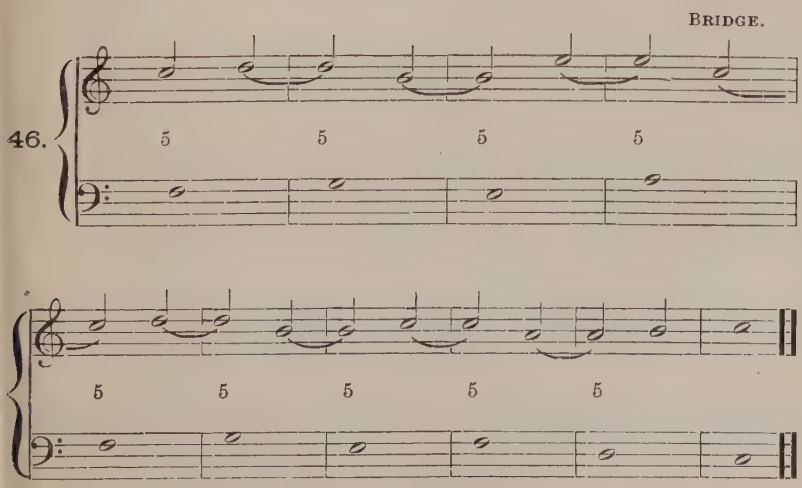
It is sometimes almost or quite impossible to continue the syncopation for any length of time. If so, **it is allowable to break the syncopation** for not more than two measures and write in the

second species. In writing a Counterpoint to a very long Cantus such breaking of the syncopation is even desirable, but it should never be resorted to for the purpose of avoiding ordinary difficulties.

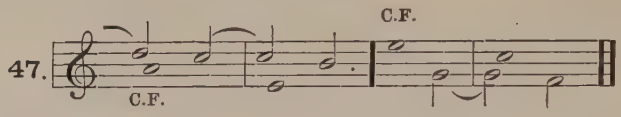
Any progression that would produce **consecutive fifths or octaves** in the First Species is **not bettered by** the **syncopation** of the Fourth Species.



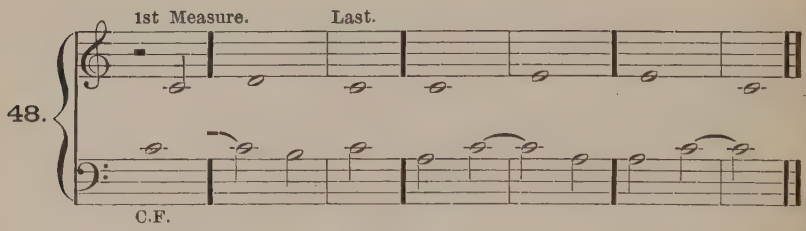
But the following progression, Fig. 46, although producing **consecutive fifths on the accented part** of the measure is allowed. As the second half of the measure contains the real harmony, the ear is not offended by the fifths used as dissonances or as unimportant notes. The student, however, is not advised to use Fig. 46 as a model.



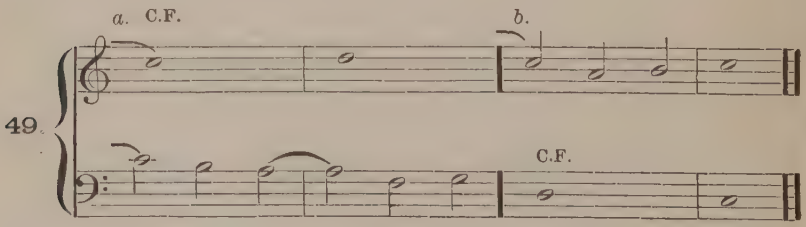
A concealed fifth as below is bad.



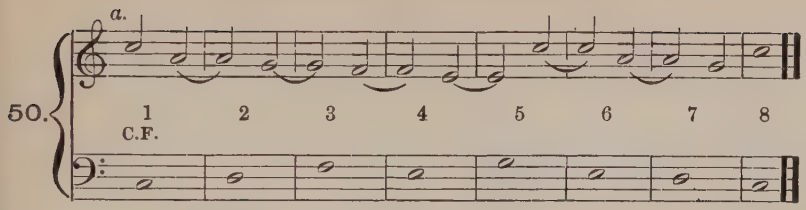
The unison may be used in the first and last measures. Also with moderation in other measures as in Fig. 48.



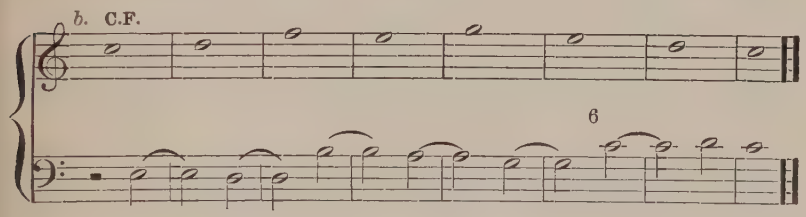
Counterpoint of **the Fourth Species** is occasionally written **in triple time.** Here **the** suspended **dissonance** regularly **resolves on the second beat.** By a process similar to the use of changing tones spoken of in the Third Species, **the dissonant tone may** first **leap** to a consonant tone (on the second beat) and then resolve regularly on the third beat. Such resolution is called an **Ornamental Resolution.** Fig. 49*b*.



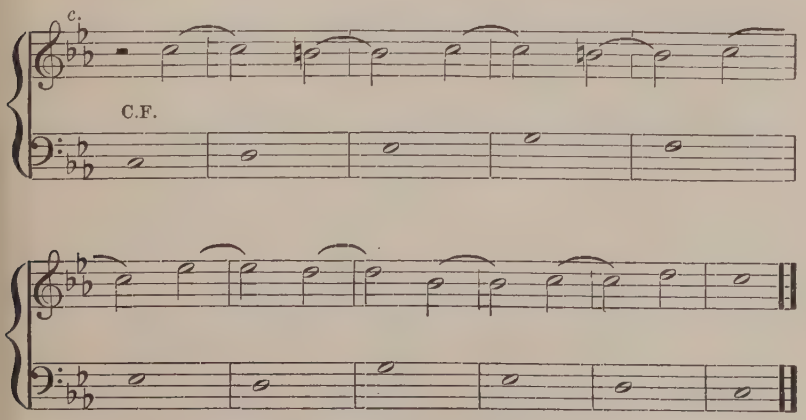
As heretofore the student should study carefully the following models before writing Counterpoint of his own to the Canti given. The first four are models of **what to avoid.**



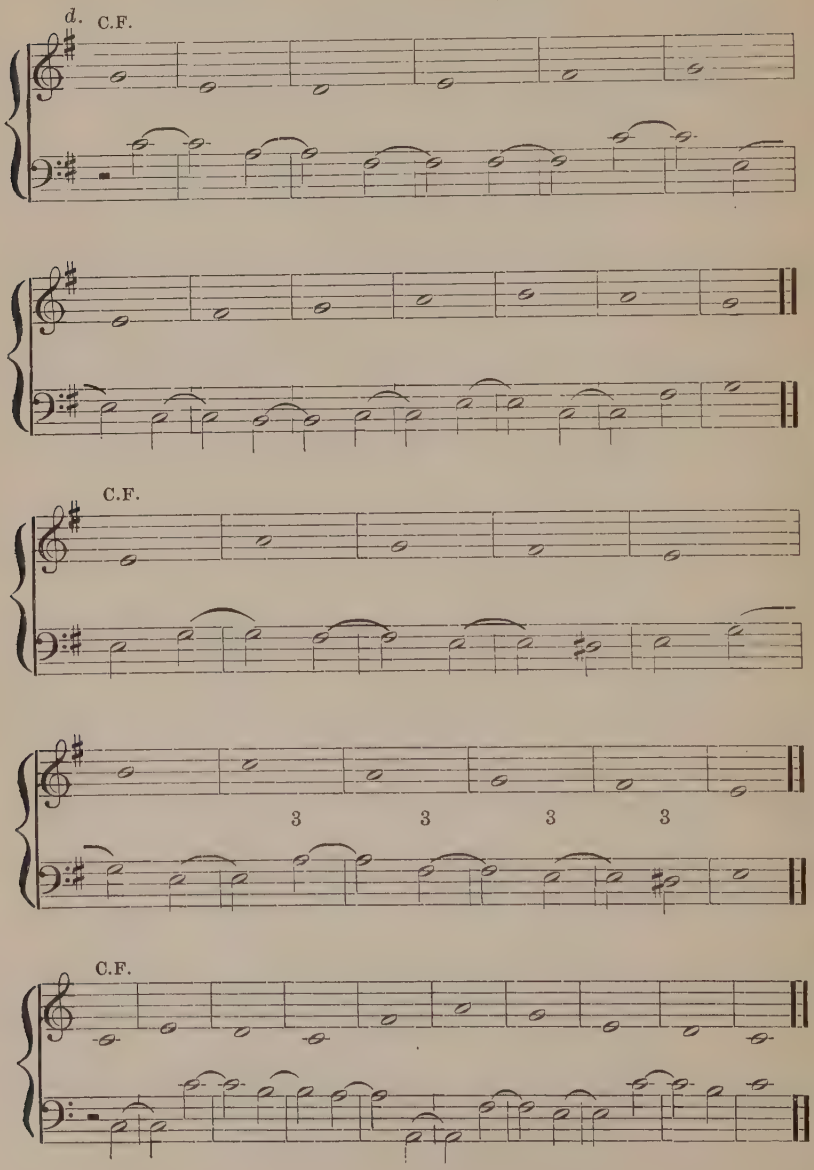
1. Two chords implied in one measure. 2. Dissonance used as preparation and also as resolution. 3–4. Parallel octaves. 5. Dissonance taken by a skip, also used as a preparation. 7. Dissonance as resolution also left by a skip. 7–8. Wrong cadence.

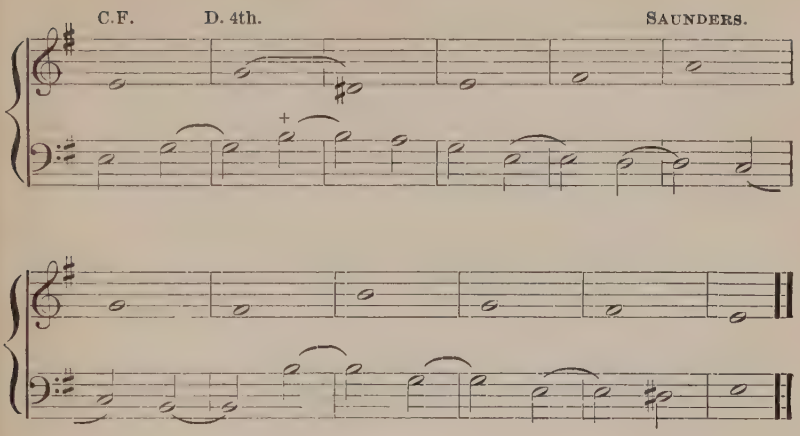


In measure 6 although the chord is apparently a C position ($^{6}_{4}$) chord, the progression is good as G is not regarded as an harmonic tone. The student should find and correct the numerous mistakes in this and the following exercise.

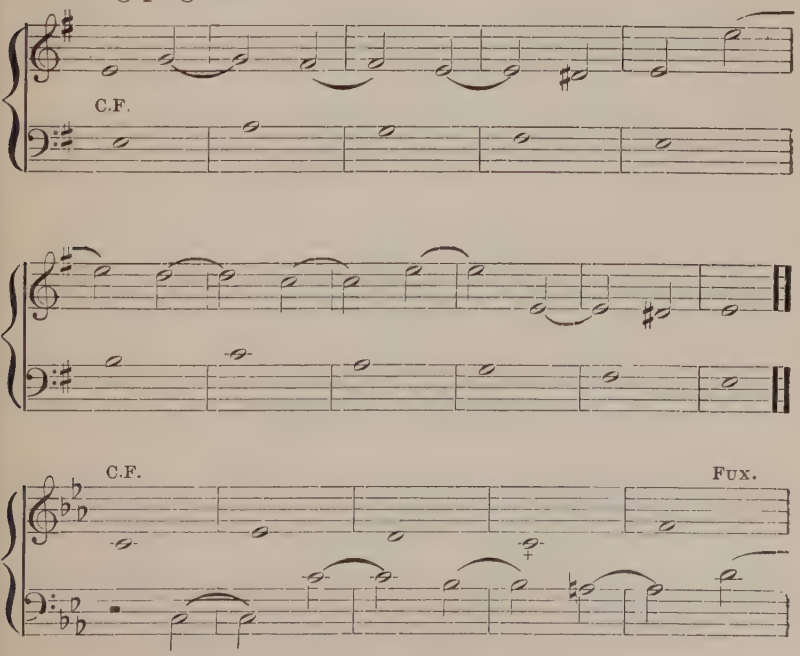


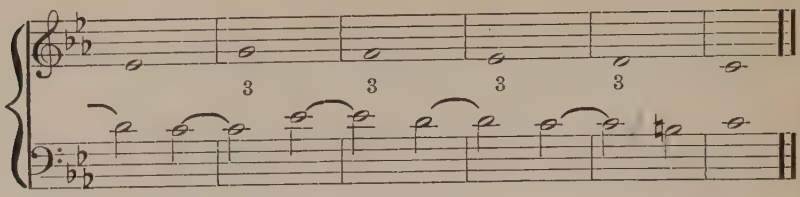
Find at least eleven errors in the following:



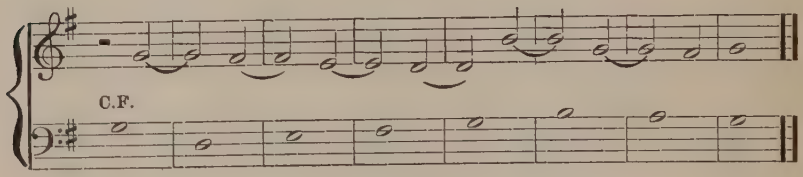


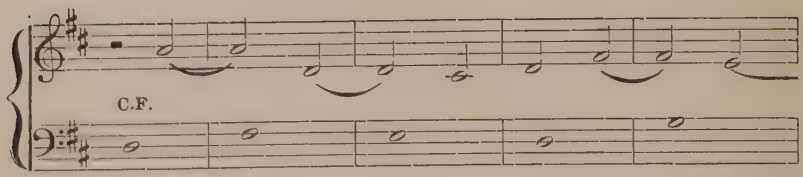
This Diminished 4th is allowed in the Minor Mode. In the fifth and sixth measures the minor sixth and seventh are used in descending progression.

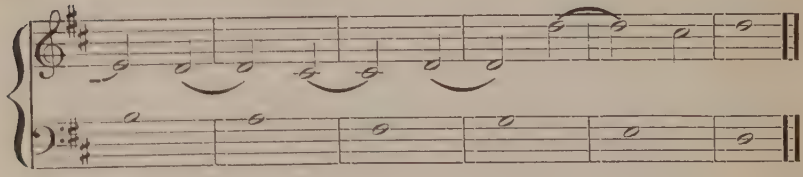


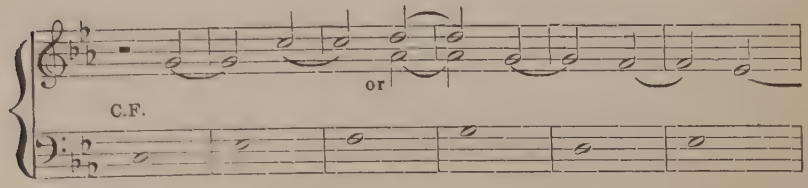


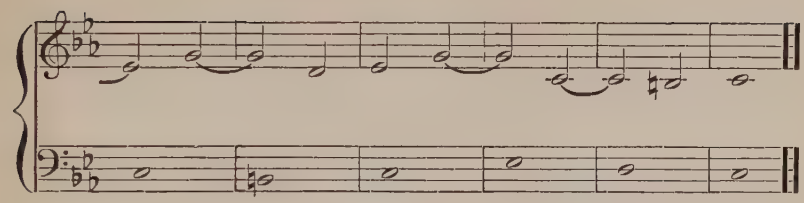
The counterpoint is written in the Dorian Mode (A♮) thus avoiding the tritone A♭–D.



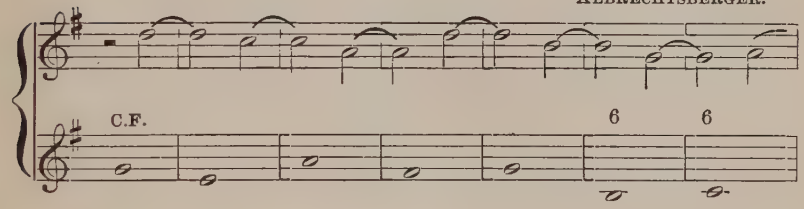


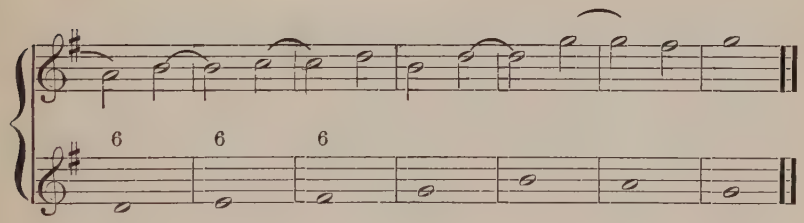




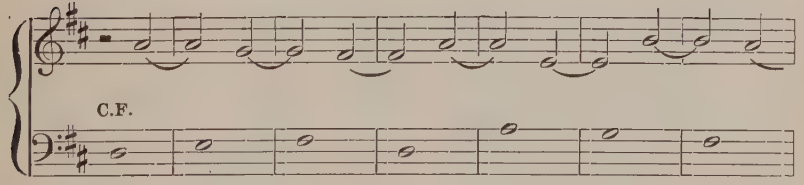


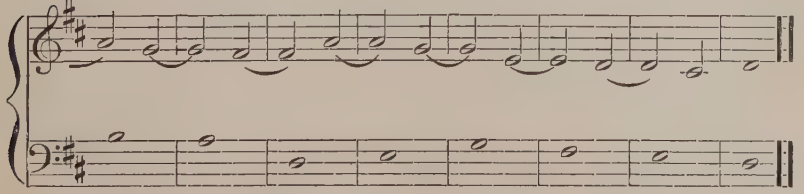
ALBRECHTSBERGER.





FÉTIS.





CHAPTER V.

TWO-PART COUNTERPOINT. FIFTH SPECIES.

The **Fifth Species** of Counterpoint is a combination of all the others and approaches more nearly to actual composition than any of the other four. It is commonly called **Florid Counterpoint** as it is an elaborate form of Counterpoint. The student will succeed best in writing this Species if he regards it as written on the Fourth Species as a basis, using the Fourth Species, especially with ornamental resolutions and other elaborations, more frequently than the others.

The **First Species** will be found only in the last measure.

The **Second Species,** though its use is correct, does not often occur except at the cadence.

The **Third Species** had best not be used for more than two measures, more often for a single measure or for part of a measure.

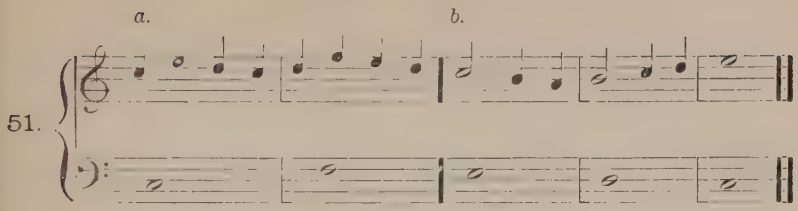
The **Fourth Species,** as stated above, occurs very frequently, sometimes in strict form, more often combined with the other Species, or with **ornamental resolutions.** (See Figures 52 and 53 below.)

In this Species especially must the student keep clearly in mind the **Principle of Variety.**

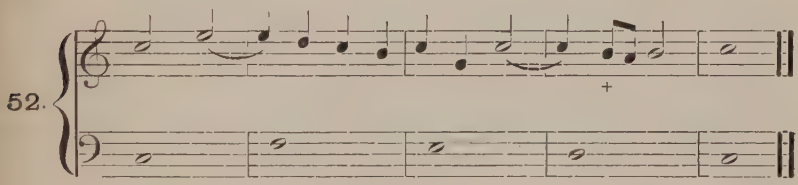
It is best not to use **more than two measures** of the same Species **in succession.** It is especially desirable that the combination of Species occur **in the same measure.** A mere succession of different species in different measures will not make good Florid Counterpoint.

Avoid the **repetition** of the same figure. (Fig. 51*a*.) **Principle of Variety.**

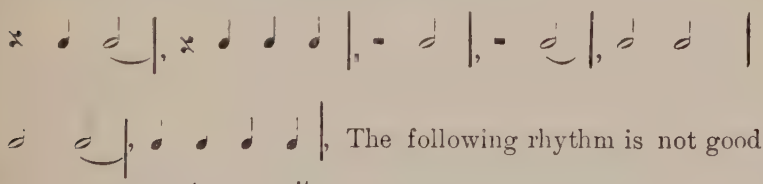
Avoid the **repetition** of the same rhythm. (Fig. 51*b*.) **Principle of Variety.**



The use of **eighth notes** on the second or fourth beat is allowed and recommended but only by stepwise progression. Figures 52 and 53.

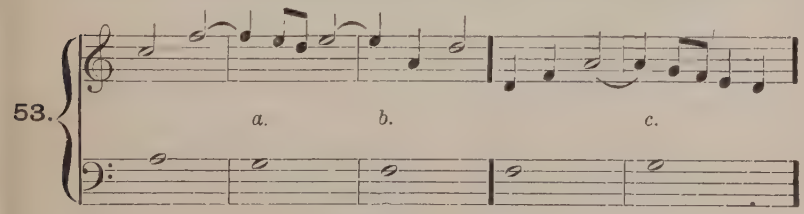


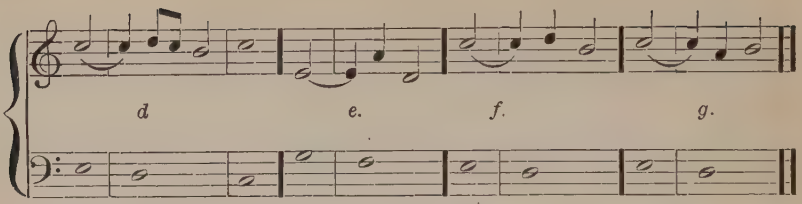
The Counterpoint should begin with a Perfect Concord just as in the other Species, either a half or a quarter rest on the first part of the first measure being allowed. We may have then the following rhythms in the first measure:



The following rhythm is not good in any measure;

The Ornamental Resolutions spoken of above are as follows:

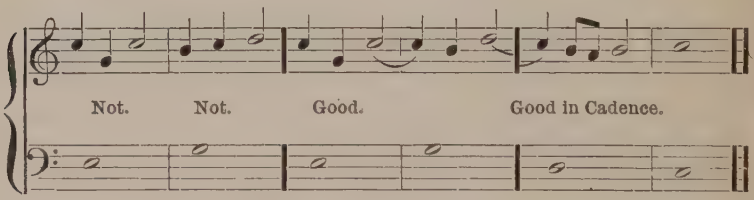




When the tie is used, **the first** of the two notes **must** always **be as long as the second,** and is usually **longer.** Thus a half note may be tied to another half, or to a quarter, but a **quarter must never be tied to a half note.** A dotted half or a dotted quarter note is not allowed.

When a half note is preceded in the same measure by notes of less value, it should always be tied to the following note. This rule is however, disregarded at the cadence.

54.

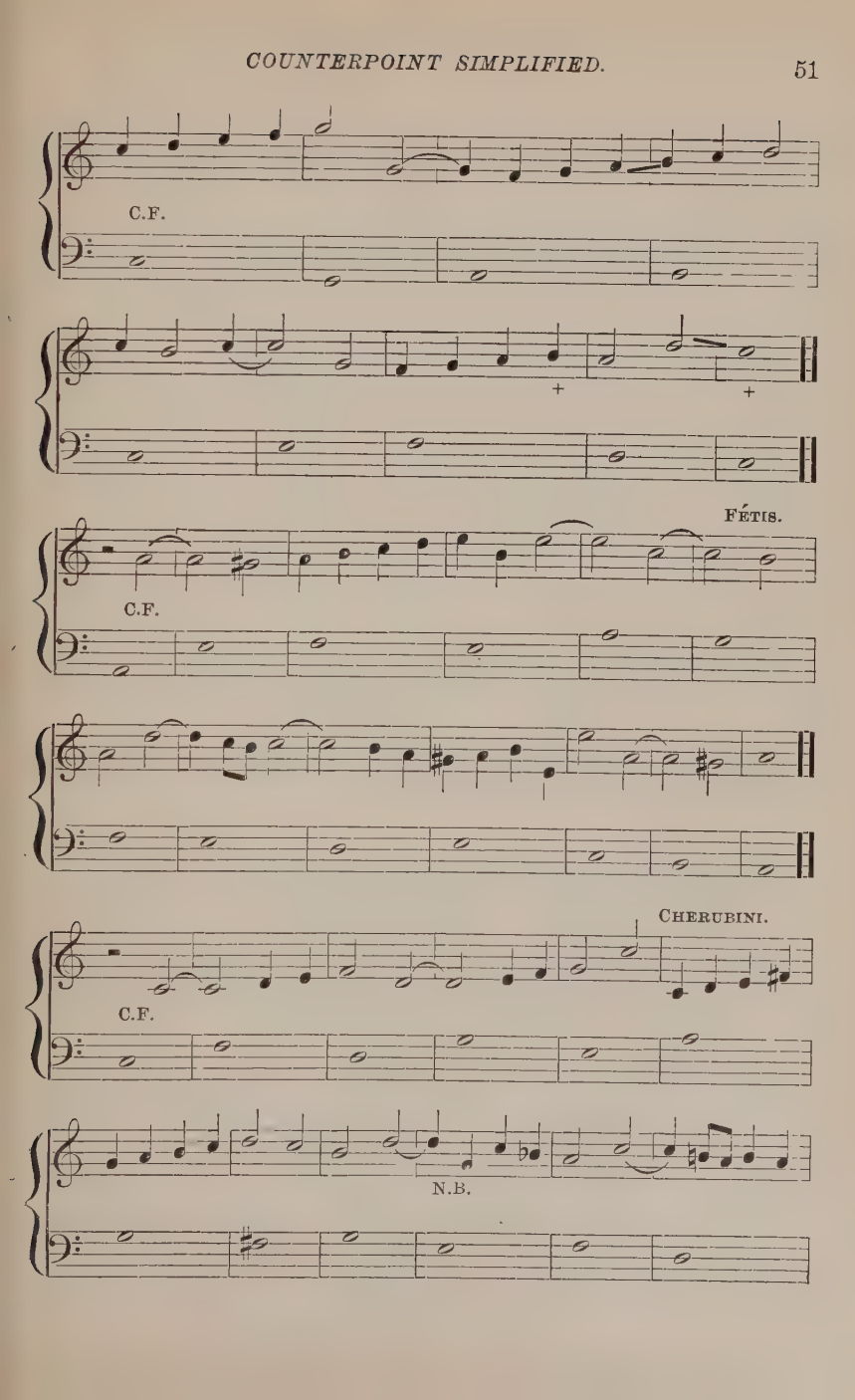


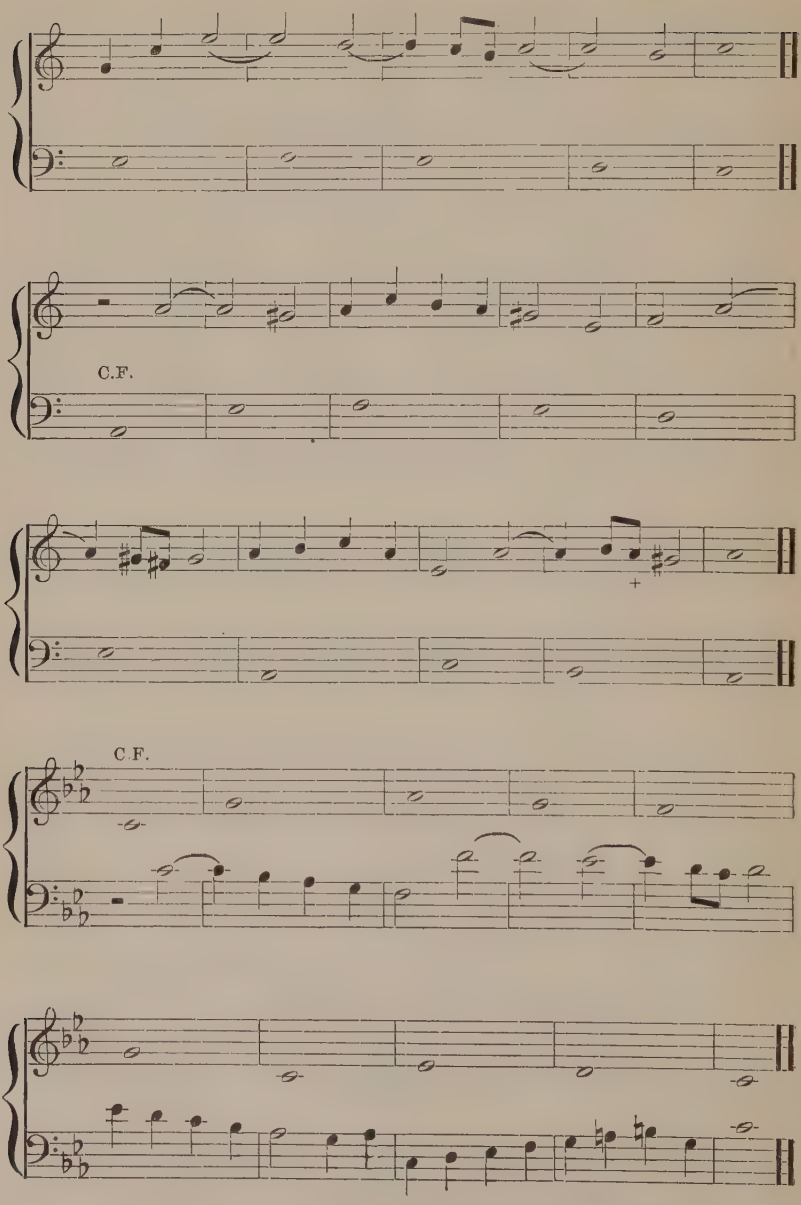
The Cadence may be of the Second or (preferably) of the Fourth Species. If the latter, **ornamental resolutions** may be used.

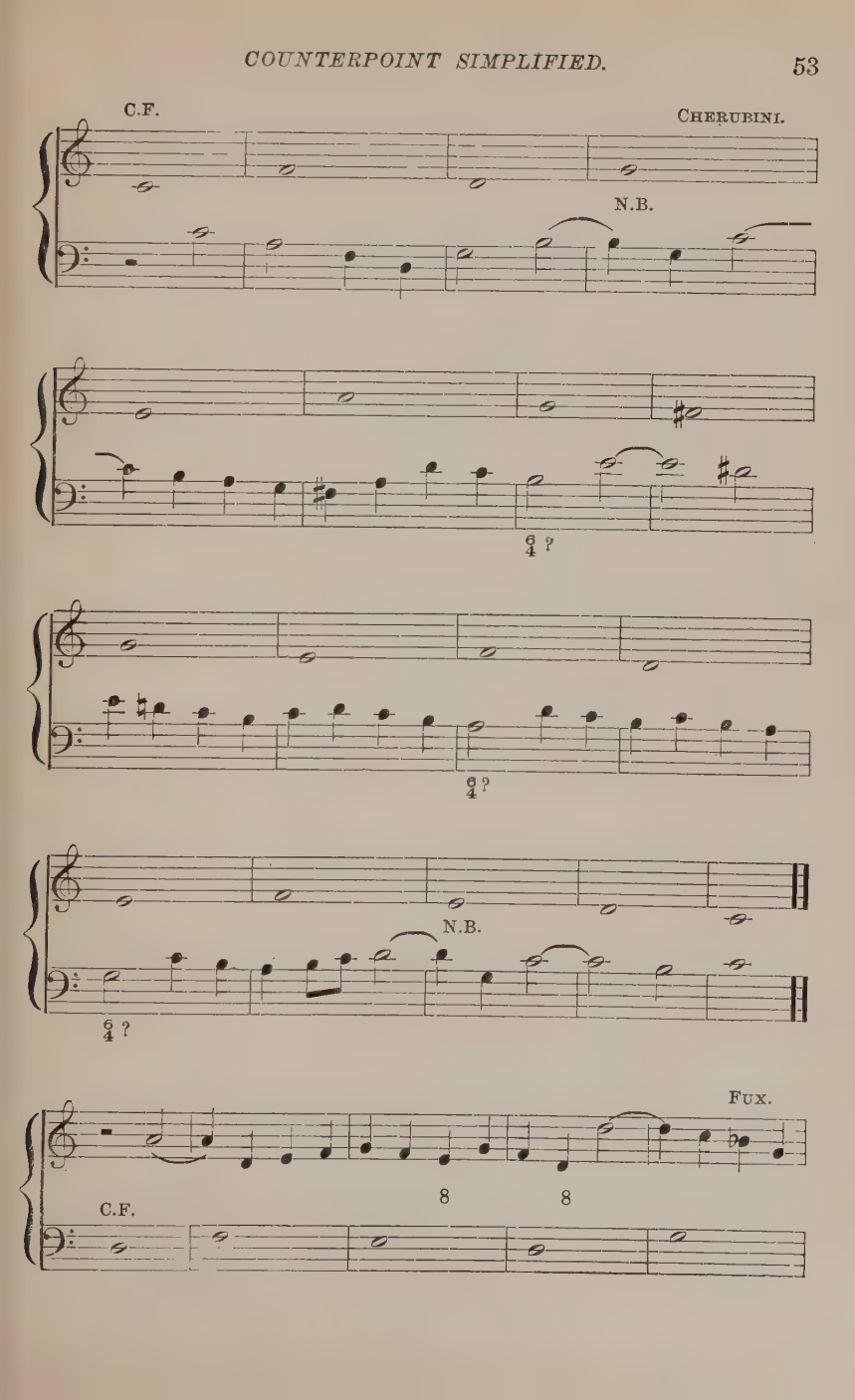
The following are examples of Counterpoint written in this Species. **The student is again urged to play them over repeatedly and to examine them with the closest attention that he may become familiar with the methods of thought of the old contrapuntists.** The first one is full of errors, which should be corrected by the student, the others are intended as models.

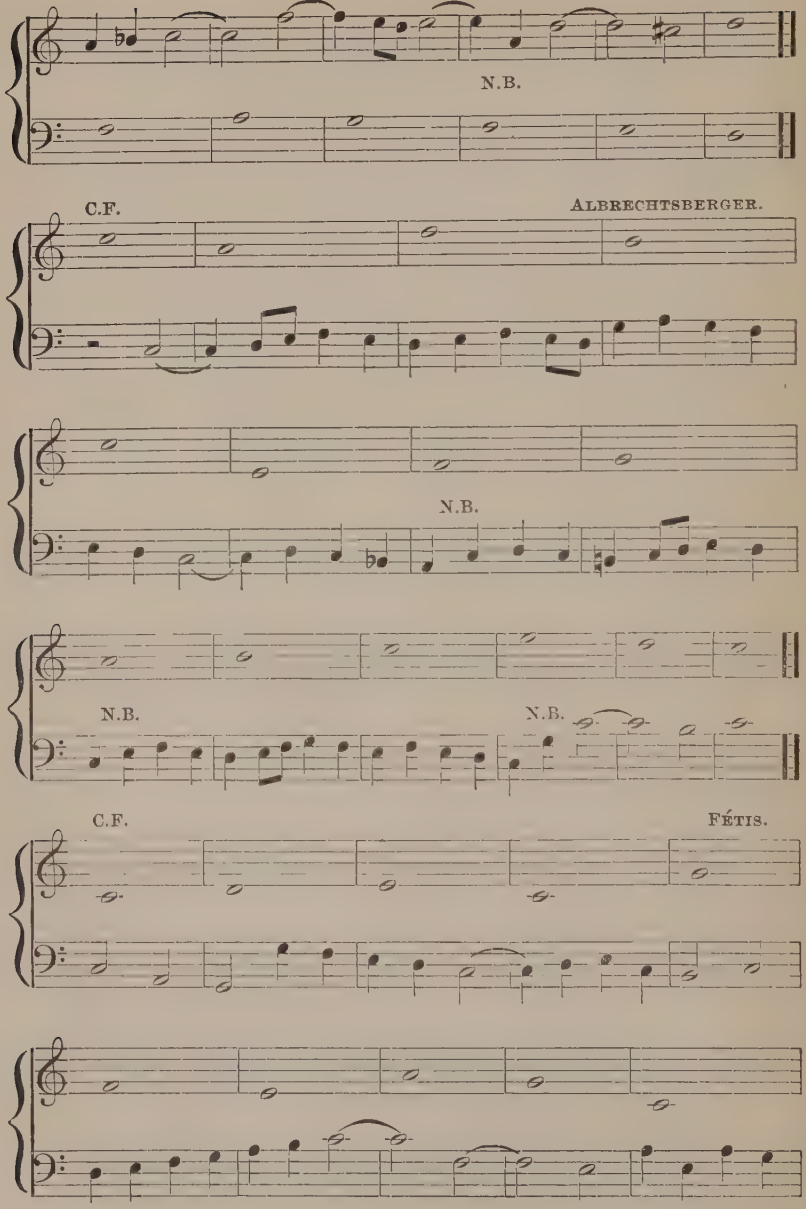
Exercises should be written as in the other Species under the supervision of the teacher.

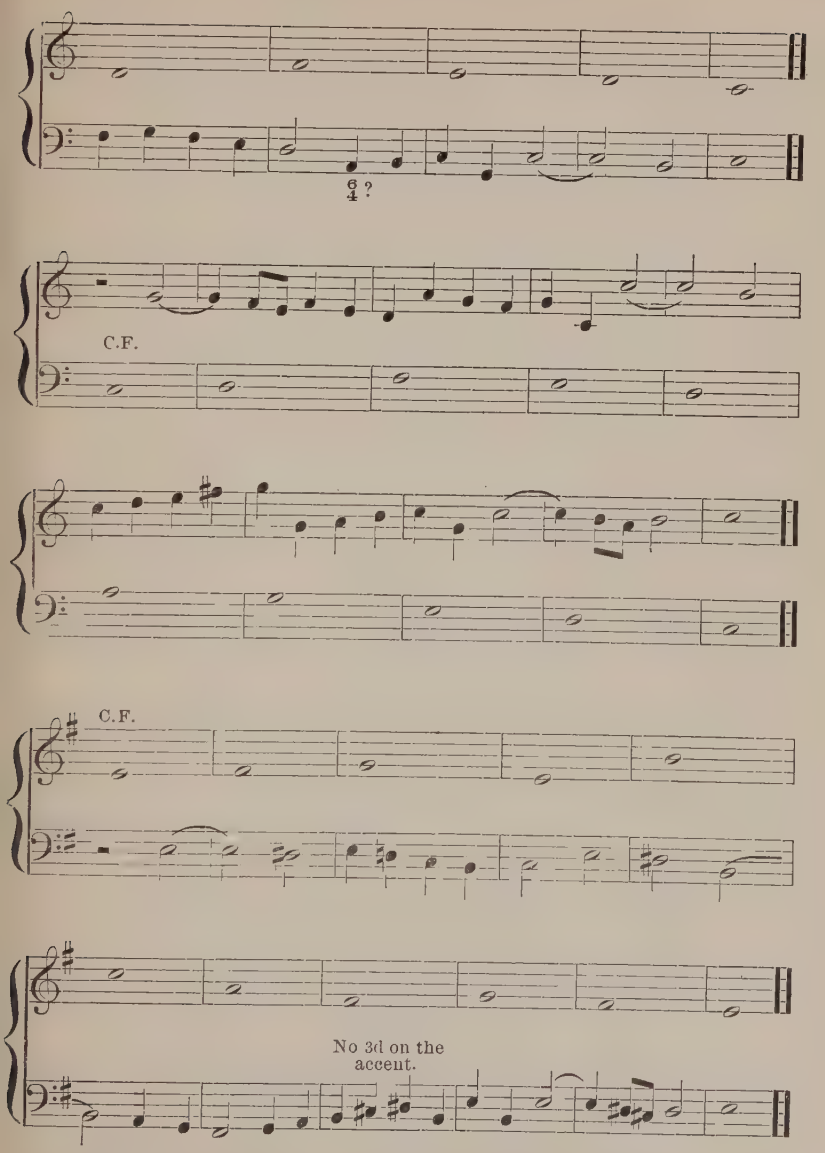
Counterpoint of this Species is also written in **Triple** and in **Compound Time.** No new rules are required.


C.F.
FÉTIS.
C.F.
CHERUBINI.
C.F.
N.B.


C.F.
C.F.


C.F.
CHERUBINI.
N.B.
6/4 ?
6/4 ?
N.B.
6/4 ?
FUX.
8
8
C.F.


N.B.
C.F.
ALBRECHTSBERGER.
N.B.
N.B.
N.B.
C.F.
FÉTIS.



This Counterpoint may be written an octave higher.

CHAPTER VI.

THREE-PART COUNTERPOINT.

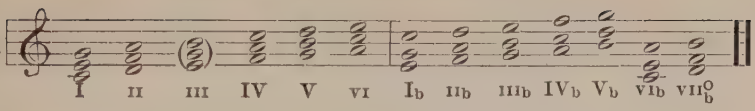
In Three-Part Counterpoint, a melody (Cantus Firmus) is given to which we are to fit **two Counterpoints.**

Counterpoint in three parts may be written in each of the five species. Also in certain **combinations of species.** The following are **general observations** applicable to all species of three-part Counterpoint.

Counterpoint written **with three voices** approaches more nearly to harmonic writing, and for that reason **the rules of Harmony must receive more attention** than heretofore. Still the progression of each individual voice is to be regarded as of the highest importance, and in all cases where there may be a conflict between progressions that are desirable harmonically and those that are desirable melodically the latter **should always take precedence.** As Fétis says: "Perfection consists in uniting full harmony to the greatest purity of voice movement." In general, we may say that **the rules of Two-Part Counterpoint apply** with equal force **to the outer voices** in Three-Part Counterpoint, and the student before writing in each Species should review the rules for that Species in Two-Voiced Counterpoint.

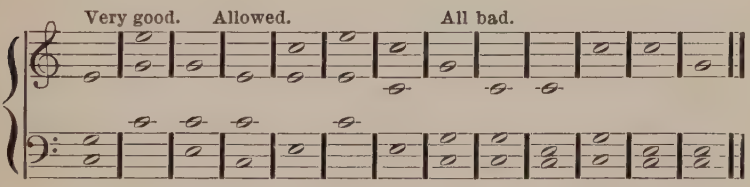
The only chords possible are those previously given, but with three voices the chords may be complete, while with but two voices they are necessarily incomplete. These chords are as follows: The first inversion (b-position) of each triad of the scale and the a-position (uninverted chord) on each degree of the scale except the seventh or leading tone. The chord on the Mediant (III, the third of the scale) is also to be avoided when not inverted. The III^{+} of the minor mode with augmented fifth cannot be used at all.

55.



The Harmonic effect is best when the contiguous voices are **not more than an octave apart** and when the voices are about **equidistant.** It is better to have the wider interval between the lowest and the middle voice than between the two upper voices. The lower voices may be occasionally a tenth or even a twelfth apart. **(Principle of Euphony).**

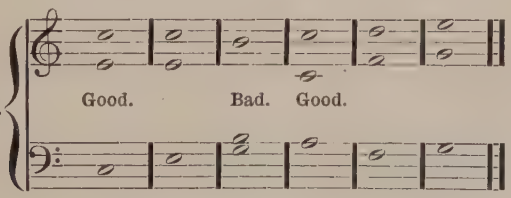
56.



It is desirable to have **one complete chord in each measure ;** in most kinds of Counterpoint on the first of the measure. See page 4. If this cannot be secured without sacrificing a free flowing motion of the voices, **the fifth of the chord may be omitted.**

Either **the root or the third** of the chord **may be doubled,** but on the first of the measure the leading tone, **(Te) must not be doubled.** The third of the minor chords is better doubled than the third of the major chords.

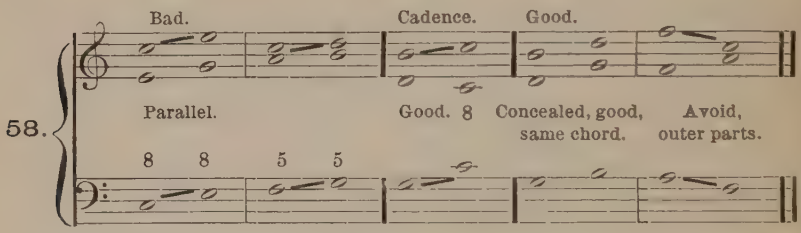
57.



The student will not go far wrong if the doubled notes in any **chord** are on the first, fourth or fifth of the scale.

Parallel Fifths and Octaves are forbidden.

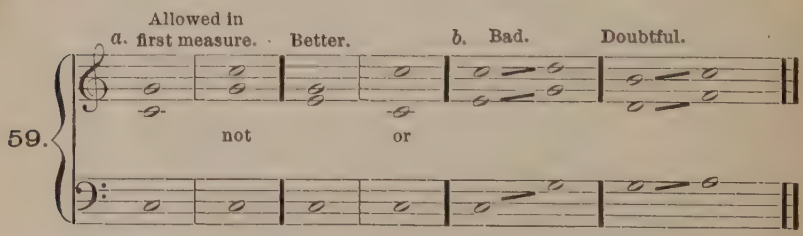
Concealed Fifths and Octaves are to be avoided. They are allowed at the cadence and when they are produced by the re-distribution of the same chord. They are especially to be avoided **between the outer parts ;**



It is usual for the last note in the highest voice to be the key-note, but in three or more parts the last note may be the third of the scale.

The unison between any two parts is to be used **only in the first and last measures.**

The first measure may contain a chord with the **third omitted** but it is best to have the chord complete or omit **both third and fifth** thus beginning with unison or octave, Fig. 59*a*, and in any case the first chord must have the root in the Bass.

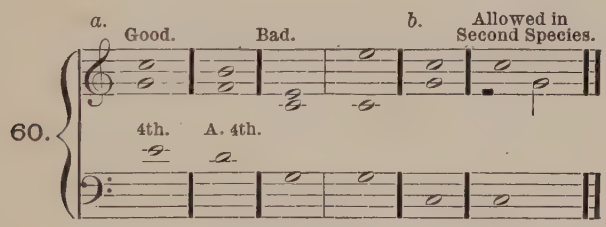


All the parts should very seldom move in the **same direction.** Fig. 59*b*. However if such motion is simply the result of a re-distribution of a chord there is no bad effect as Fig. 58 fourth measure.

The voices may **occasionally cross** (Principle of Variety) to

secure a better melodic progression, but should not remain crossed more than two measures. (**Principle of Clearness.**)

The interval of the fourth, heretofore forbidden, is now frequently a necessity between the upper voices when the chord is in the b–position (first inversion). **The fourth must not occur between the lowest voice and either upper voice,** only between the two upper voices, neither must it occur on the first of the measure, when the chord is incomplete. Fig. 60*b*.



CHAPTER VII.

THREE-PART COUNTERPOINT. FIRST SPECIES.

All the parts are in **notes of the same value** as those of the Cantus Firmus.

Every chord except the first and last **should be a complete chord** if possible.

All the rules given in the preceding chapter hold good.

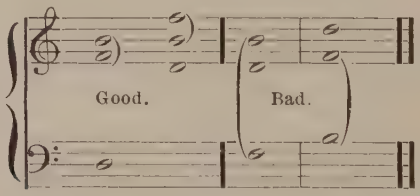
The leading note (**Te**) **must not be doubled.**

In order to avoid a bad progression, **a note may be repeated** in either of the upper voices. Such repetition is not so good in the lowest part.

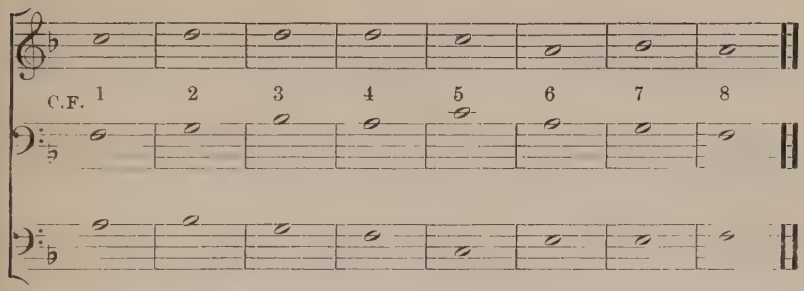
The interval of **the fourth between** the **two upper voices is allowed.**

In the VII$^{6}_{5}$ (the first inversion of the chord on the leading tone) the upper voices may be at the interval either of the **augmented fourth** or the **diminished fifth,** but such intervals must not occur between the lowest part and either upper part.

61.

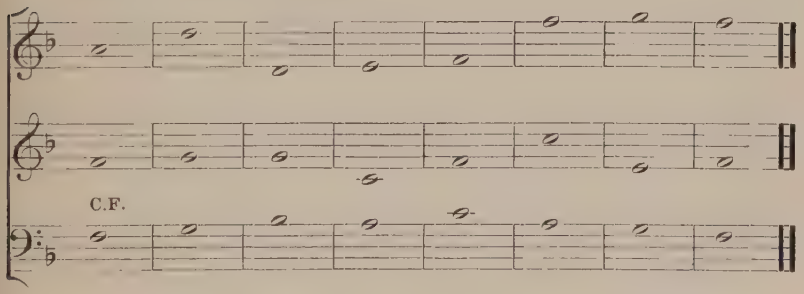


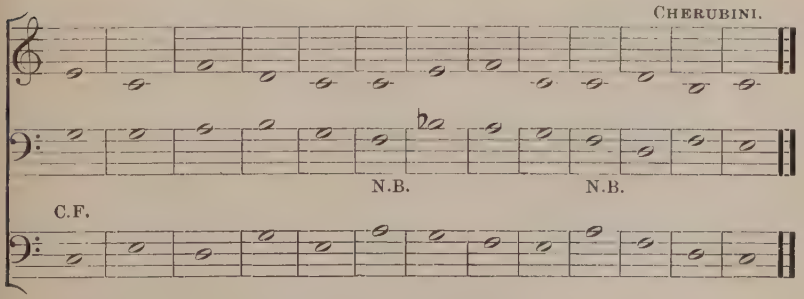
The following are models to be carefully studied and with the exception of the first two, are to be imitated by the student in his writing. He should in this and the following species of Three-Voiced Counterpoint, write a considerable number of exercises using the Canti given on pages 129, 130, 131.



Measure 1 begins badly with 3d in Bass. 2–3–4. Stationary Soprano. 2. Bass goes above Tenor. 4–5. Concealed octaves between Bass and Soprano. 5. No chord. 5–6. Parallel 8ves. 6. Tenor a 4th from Bass. 7. Dim. 5th from Bass. 8. Soprano ends on 3d. Badly written as a whole the Soprano and Tenor being too far apart.

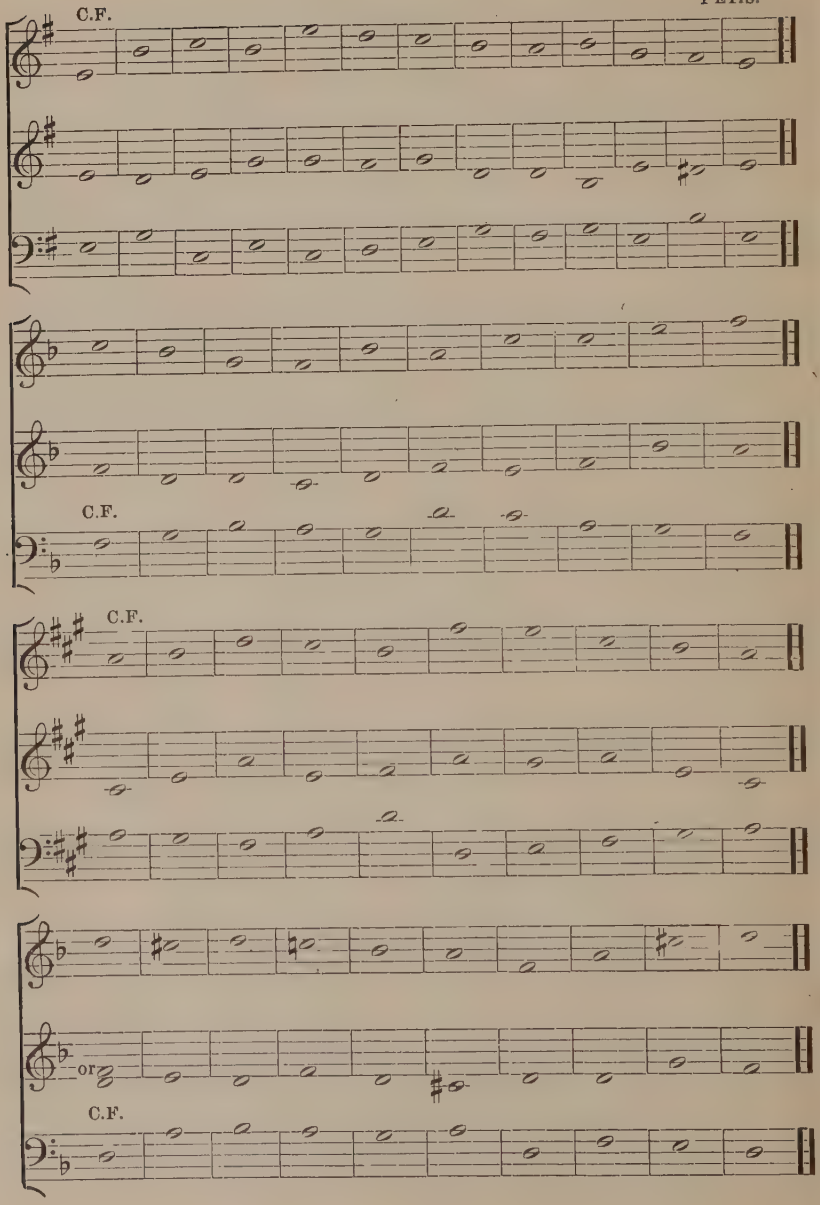
Find errors in the following:

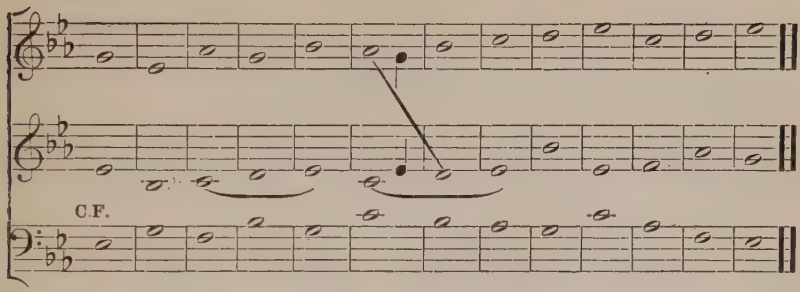




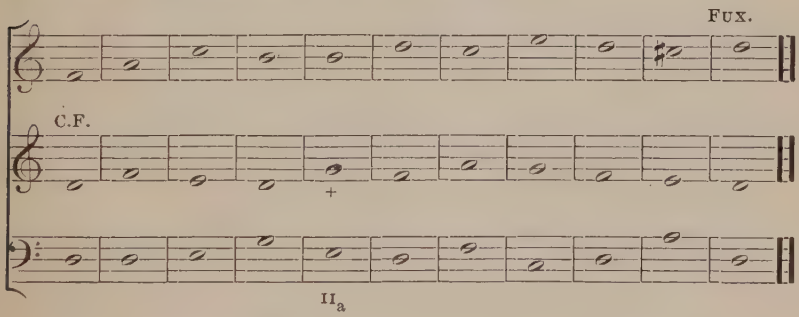
Crossing the Bass by an upper part should be avoided.

FÉTIS.

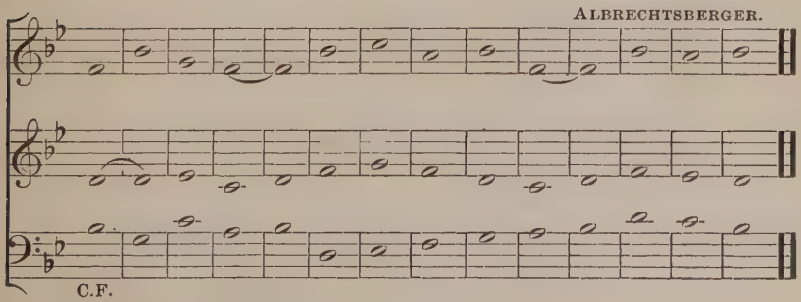




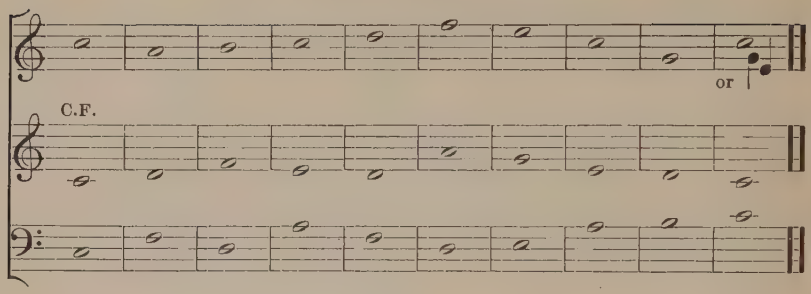
This Counterpoint is much improved by substituting the small notes in measure 6. As written first, the tritone occurs between the sixth and the seventh measure, and the repetition of the figure C–D–E, C–D–E in the Alto is not good. The repetition of E in the Alto, measures 5–6, may be allowed.

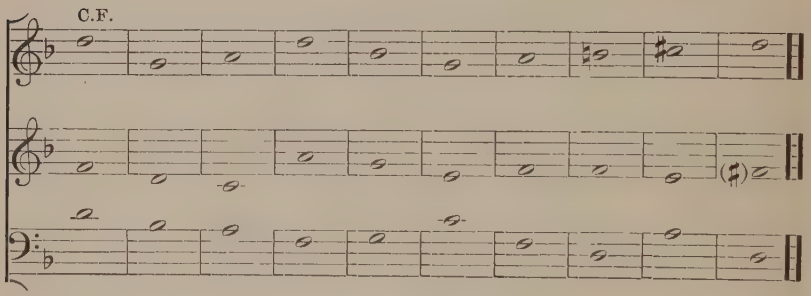


This Counterpoint by Fux is written in the Dorian mode.



The tied notes are not to be imitated.


or
C.F.


C.F.

CHAPTER VIII.

THREE-PART COUNTERPOINT. SECOND SPECIES.

All the rules given in Chapter VI hold good.

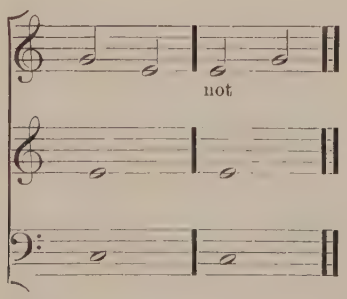
In this form of writing we have two voices written in Counterpoint to the given Cantus Firmus. **One part is** written **in** Counterpoint of **the First Species** against the Cantus Firmus and follows the rules of Three-Part Counterpoint, First Species. This part is called the **Additional Part.** It must always begin with the Cantus Firmus.

The second contrapuntal **part is** written **in the Second Species.** The following observations cover special cases arising in the Second Species.

The Counterpoint may form a fourth with the upper voice even when the chord is incomplete if this occur in the first measure. Fig. 60*b* (page 59).

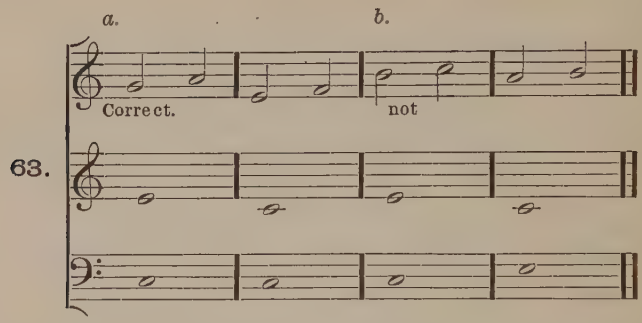
The Unison may be used between the Counterpoint of the Second Species and either of the other parts, but only **on the second half of the measure.**

62.



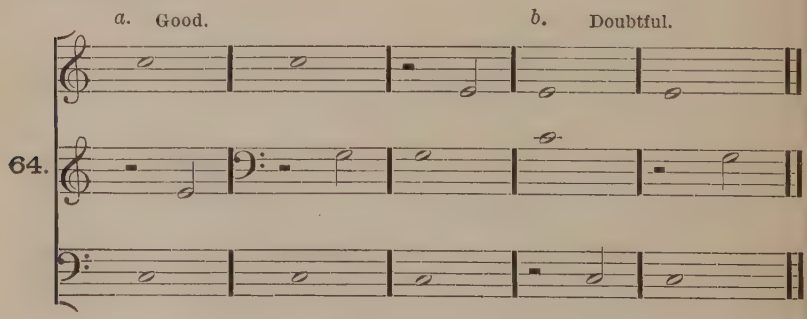
The second half of the measure in the Second Species **may be dissonant with either** or both of the other voices provided the progression is correct, but **the first half** of the measure **must be consonant with both** of the other voices.

In Fig. 63*b*, in the first measure the B although consonant with E is dissonant with C. In the second measure the A though consonant with C is a fourth from the bass note E and so incorrect.



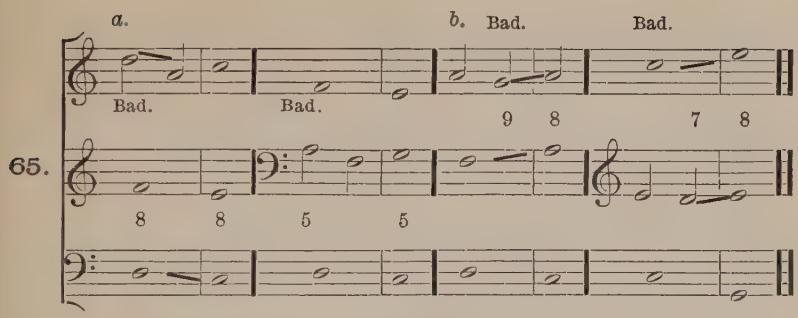
If the Counterpoint begins with a rest, the Additional Part and the Cantus Firmus usually form a **perfect** concord, unison, fifth or octave.

If the Counterpoint begins with a rest its first note may be any note of the chord, root, third or fifth, provided it is in the upper or middle voice. This was not allowed in two voiced Counterpoint.



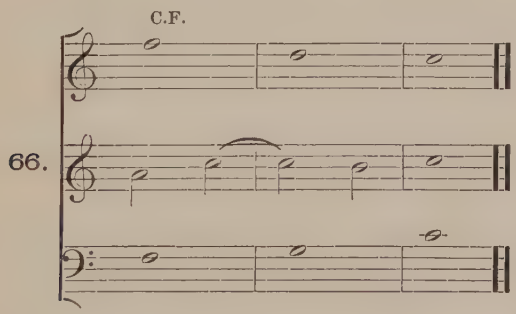
As in Two Voiced writing, Second Species, **all dissonant tones must be approached and left by degrees.**

Consecutive Fifths and octaves on the first of successive measures must not occur between any two parts. Fig. 65*a*.

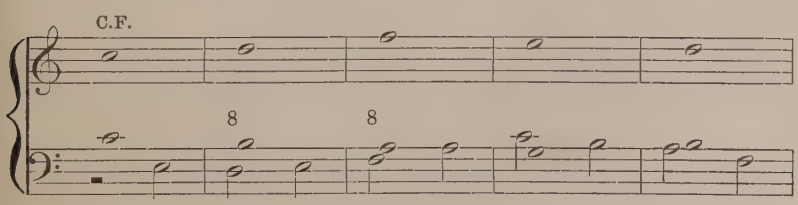


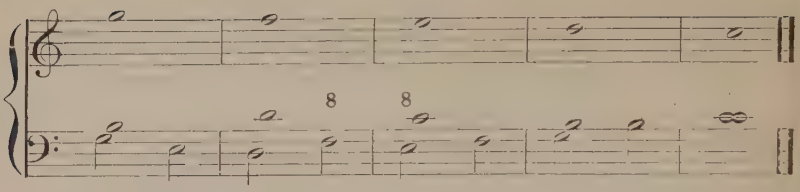
The rules against **Concealed Fifths and Octaves** are somewhat relaxed in three-part writing in this Species, but we should avoid introducing such progressions in any conspicuous way and especially we should avoid the progression of a seventh or a ninth to an octave in parallel motion. Fig. 65*b*.

The Cadence is sometimes written in the **Fourth Species** but this should be resorted to only in cases of necessity. Fig. 66.



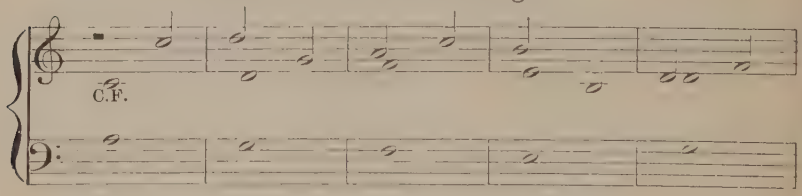
The next two illustrations are full of errors. The others are intended as models.

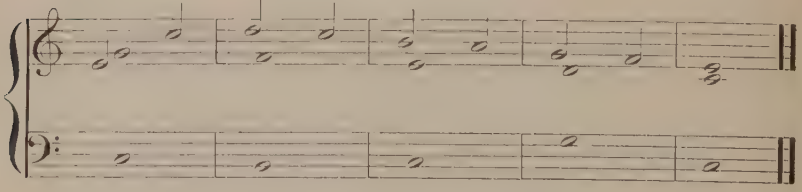


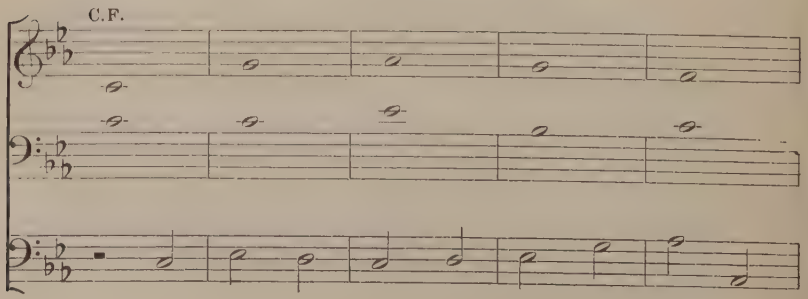


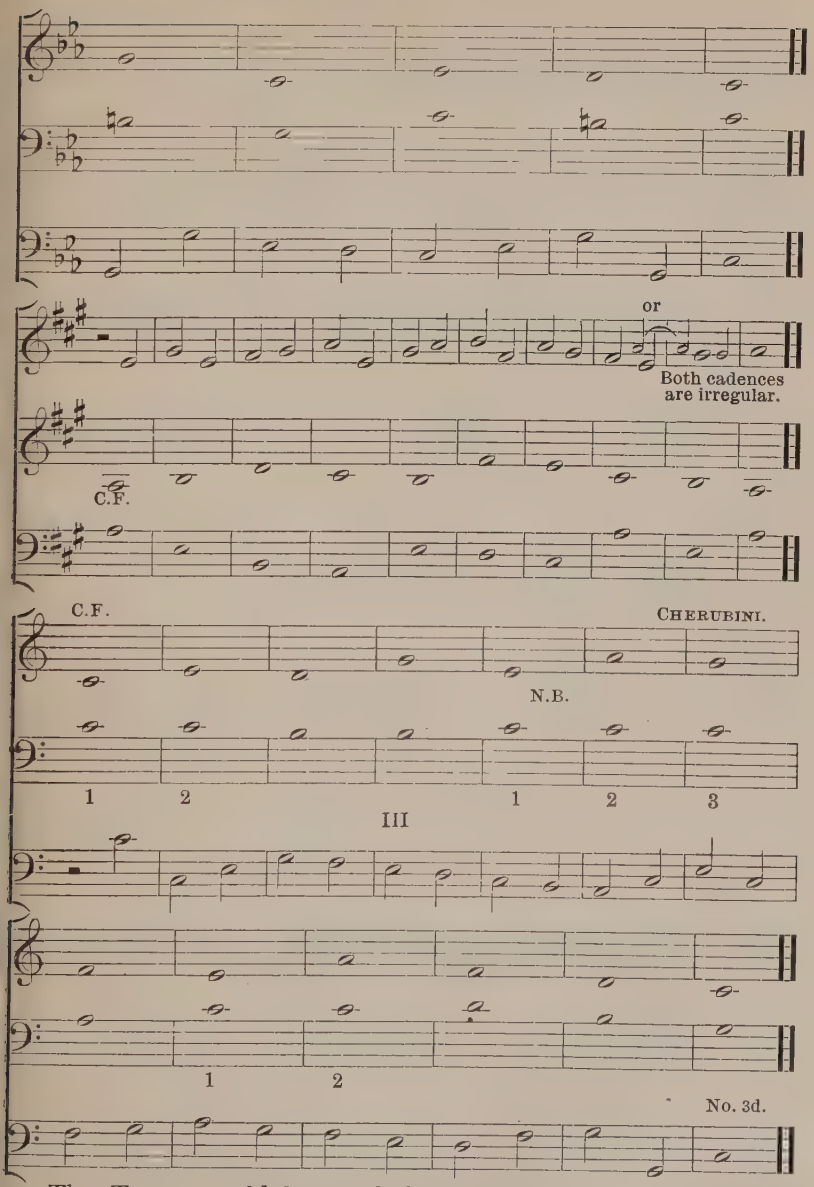
Errors. Begins with the third in the Bass. Measure 2–3 parallel octaves. Measure 4 Bass crosses Tenor, also makes a I_c. Measure 5 Dissonance on the accent. Measure 6 concealed octave in outer voices, also mediant chord. 7–8 Octaves. 9 Doubled leading tone. 9–10 consecutive unisons.

Find at least ten errors in the following.



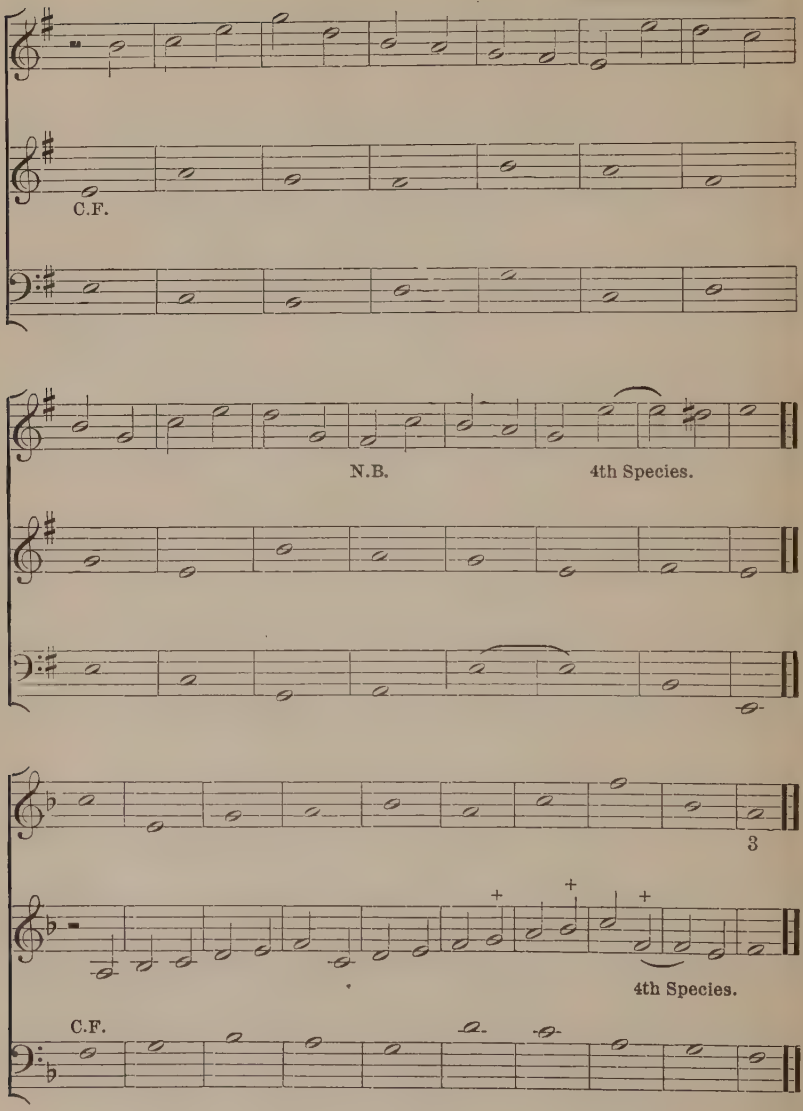




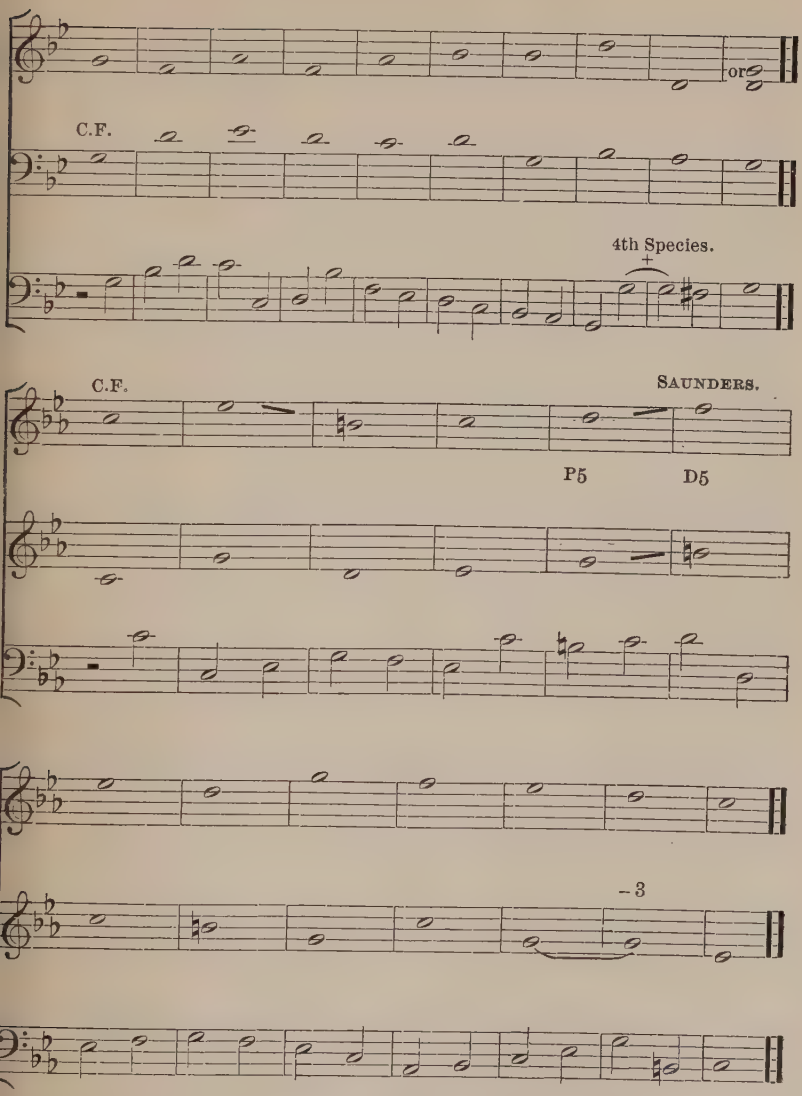


The Tenor would be much better if it was not so stationary on C.

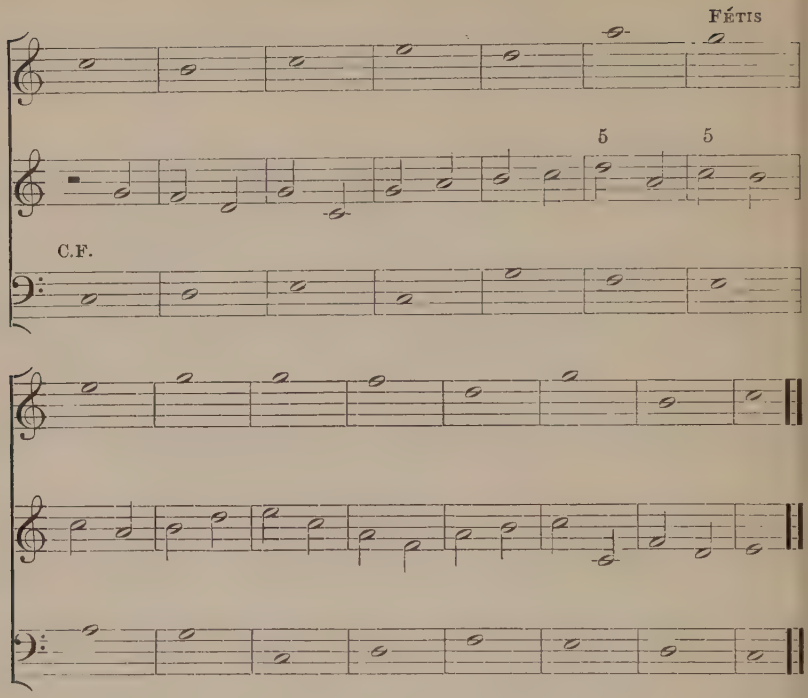
ALBRECHTSBURGER.



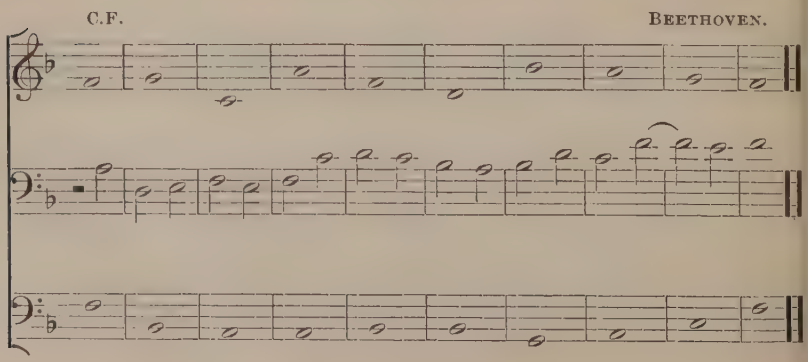
In the sixth and seventh measures the counterpoint is cramped.

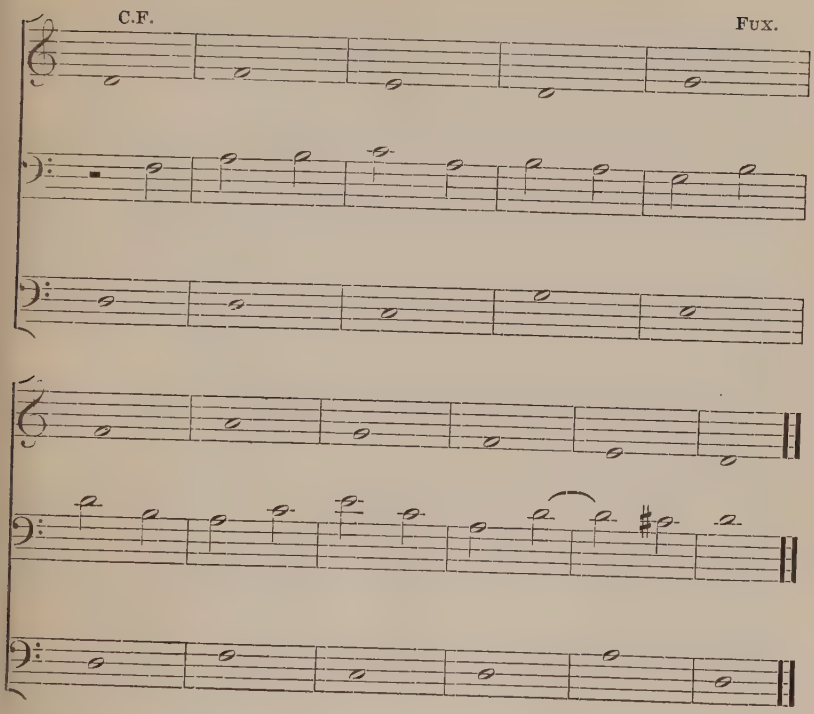


The diminished fourth, measure 2–3, is good in the minor mode. The progression by parallel motion to a perfect fifth and then to a diminished fifth is doubtful.



Although the leap of the fourth in the sixth measure is thought by some to overcome the bad effect of the parallel fifths, the student should not imitate such progressions.




C.F.
Fux.

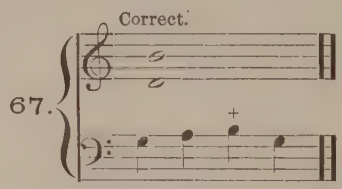
CHAPTER IX.

THREE-PART COUNTERPOINT. THIRD SPECIES.

The rules for writing **the Third Species** of Counterpoint in three parts **are** practically the **same as in two parts,** bearing in mind the points of difference between two and three-part writing that we have already learned. As in three-part writing of the Second Species, we have an **Additional Part** written in the First Species.

The rules in Chapter VI hold good in this Species.

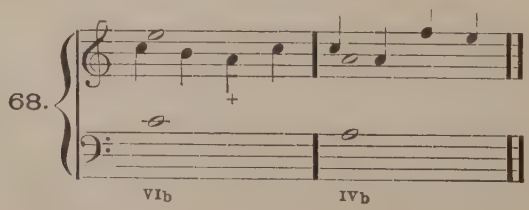
The leading tone, Te, **is sometimes doubled** in this Species when such doubling is brought about in the midst of the measure by the moving part.



The upper parts may cross for a few notes to secure a better movement of the voices.

Neither upper part may go below the lowest part. (**Principles of Variety and of Clearness.**)

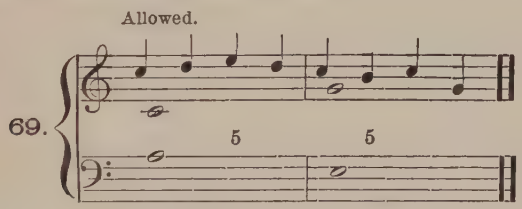
As usual in three-part Counterpoint, we should **try to have the harmony complete on the first of the measure.** Failing in this, we may still secure a complete chord in each measure by completing the chord on the **third quarter** note.



The student should refresh his memory as to the rules for writing the Third Species which he learned in two-part writing.

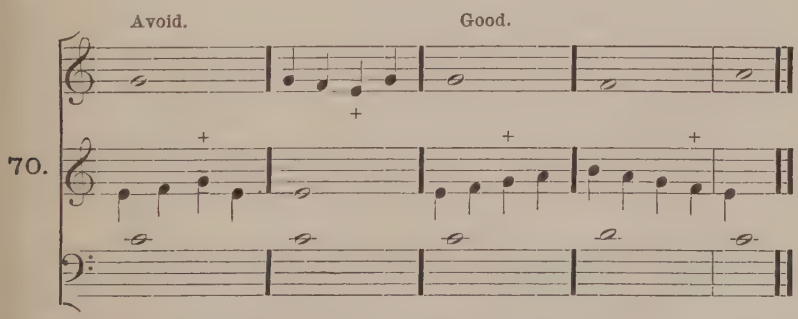
Concealed Fifths and Octaves are less rigorously excluded, but should be avoided when possible.

It may not always be possible to place four quarter notes between perfect fifths or octaves. If not, try to make one (or both) of the fifths or octaves a passing tone.



Parallel Fifths and Octaves must not occur on the first notes of consecutive measures, on the third quarters of consecutive measures, nor from the fourth quarter of one measure to the first quarter of the next.

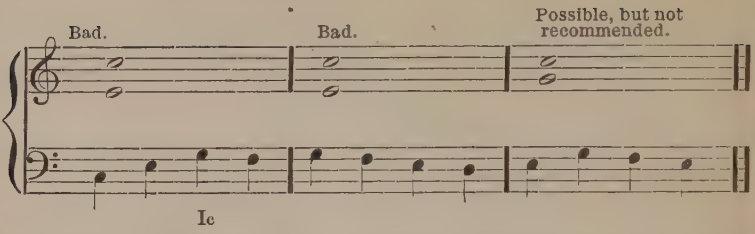
Avoid a step-wise progression to a unison unless the part in quarter notes is crossing the other.



When the Third Species is in the bass, avoid a figure that would suggest a c-position ($^{6}_{4}$ chord).

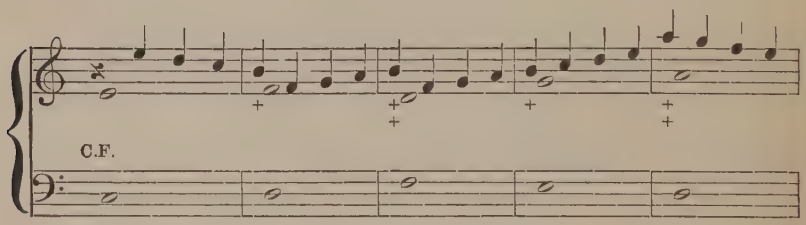
If the fifth of the chord comes on the second or fourth quarters, the progression may be allowed, but not on the first or third quarters. Fig. 71.

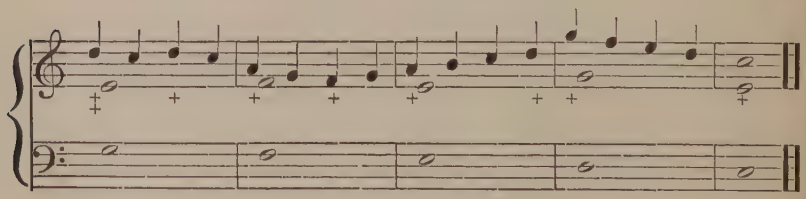
71.

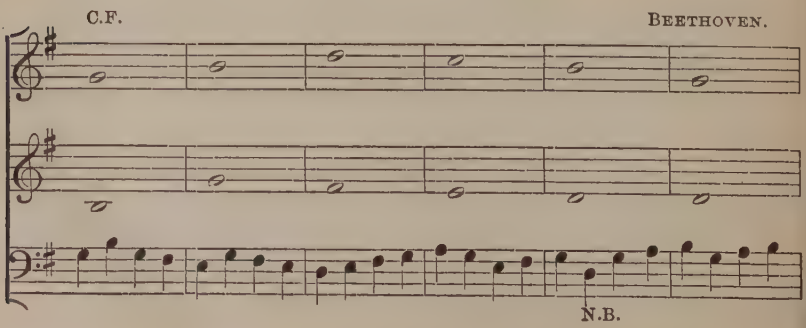


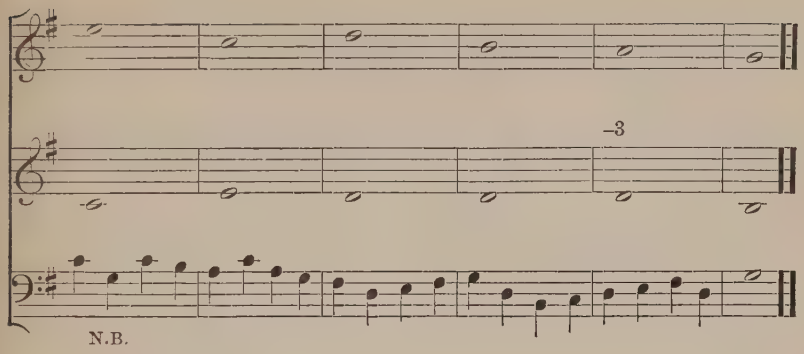
The first of the following illustrations contains numerous errors. The others are intended as models.

Find the errors marked in the following, and write out in corrected form.



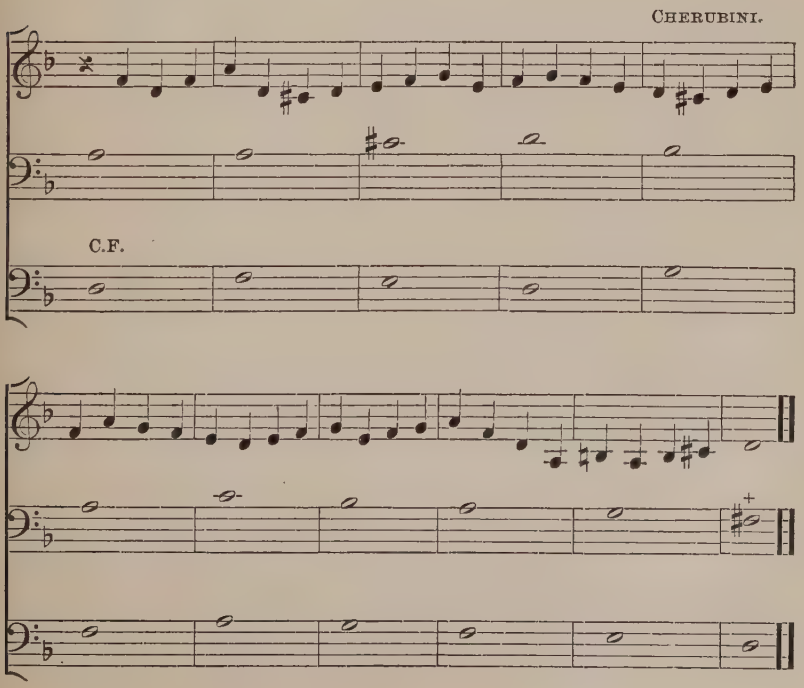


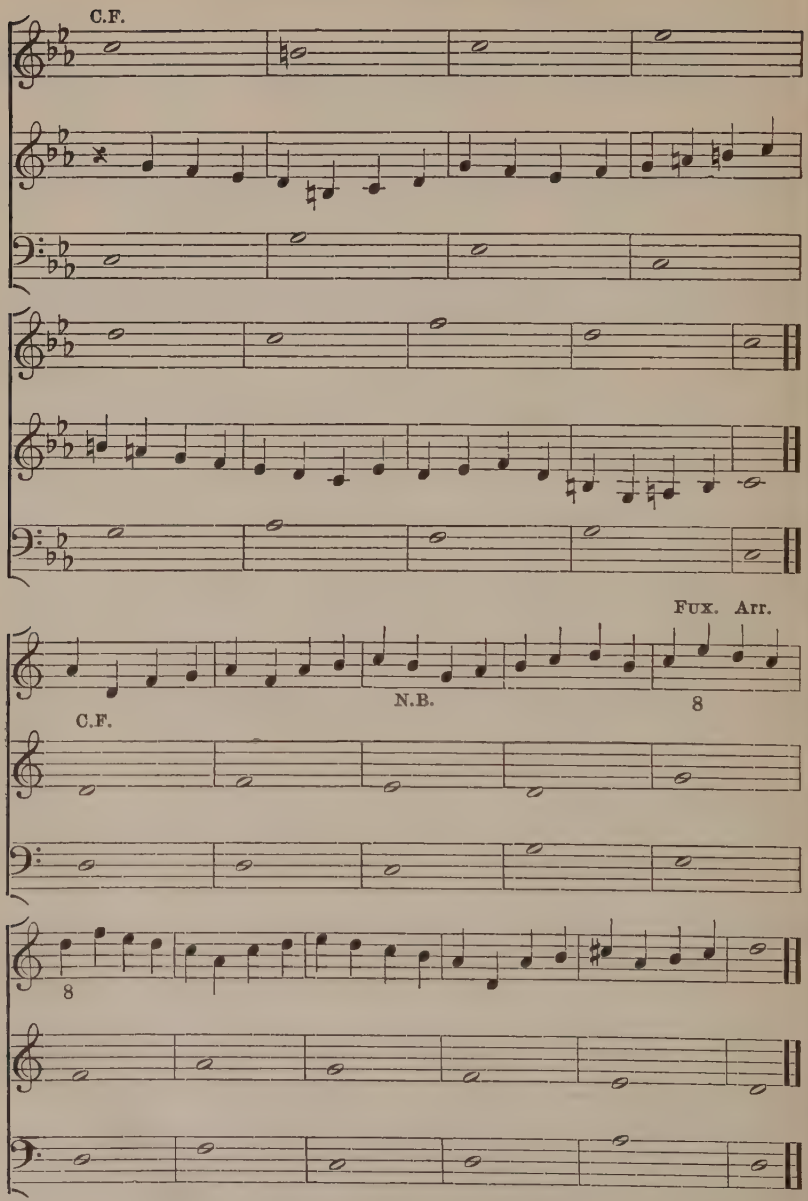




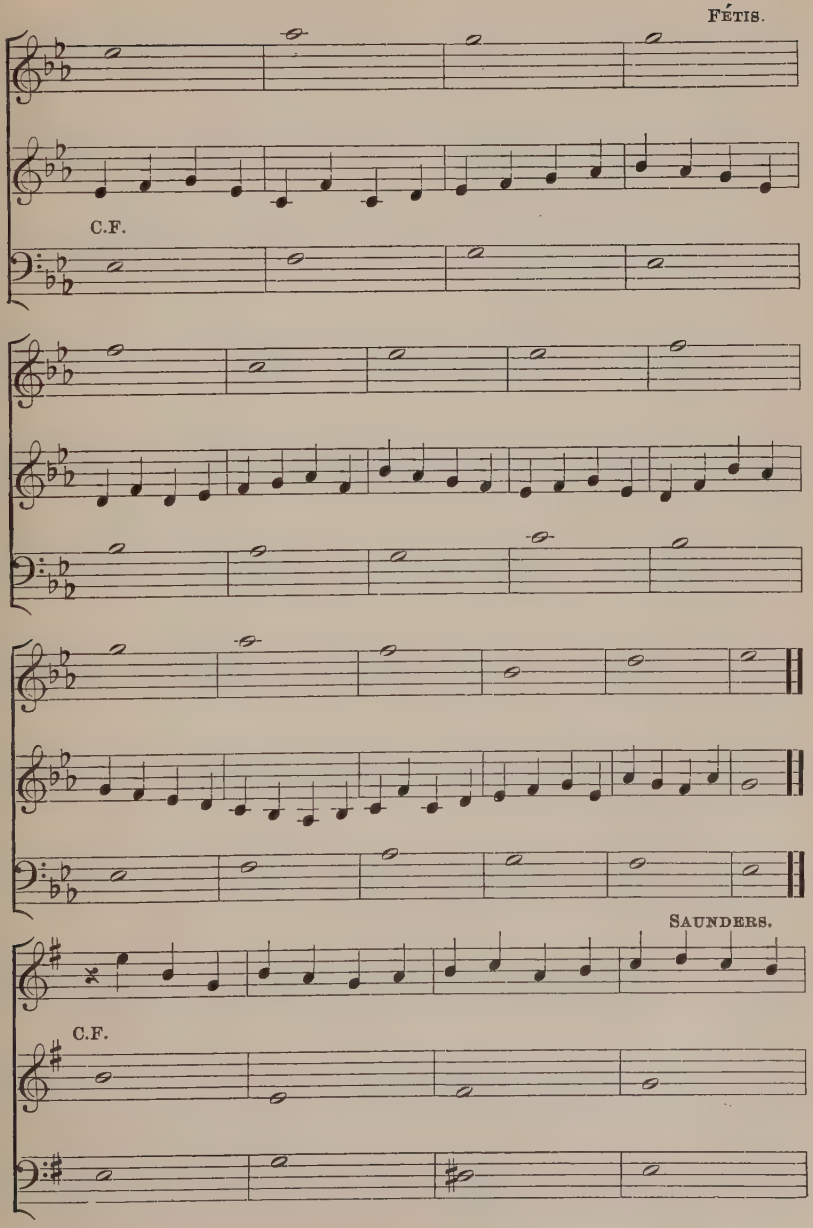
In measure four the dissonant passing tone G is left by a leap. At N.B. the c-position chord is suggested.

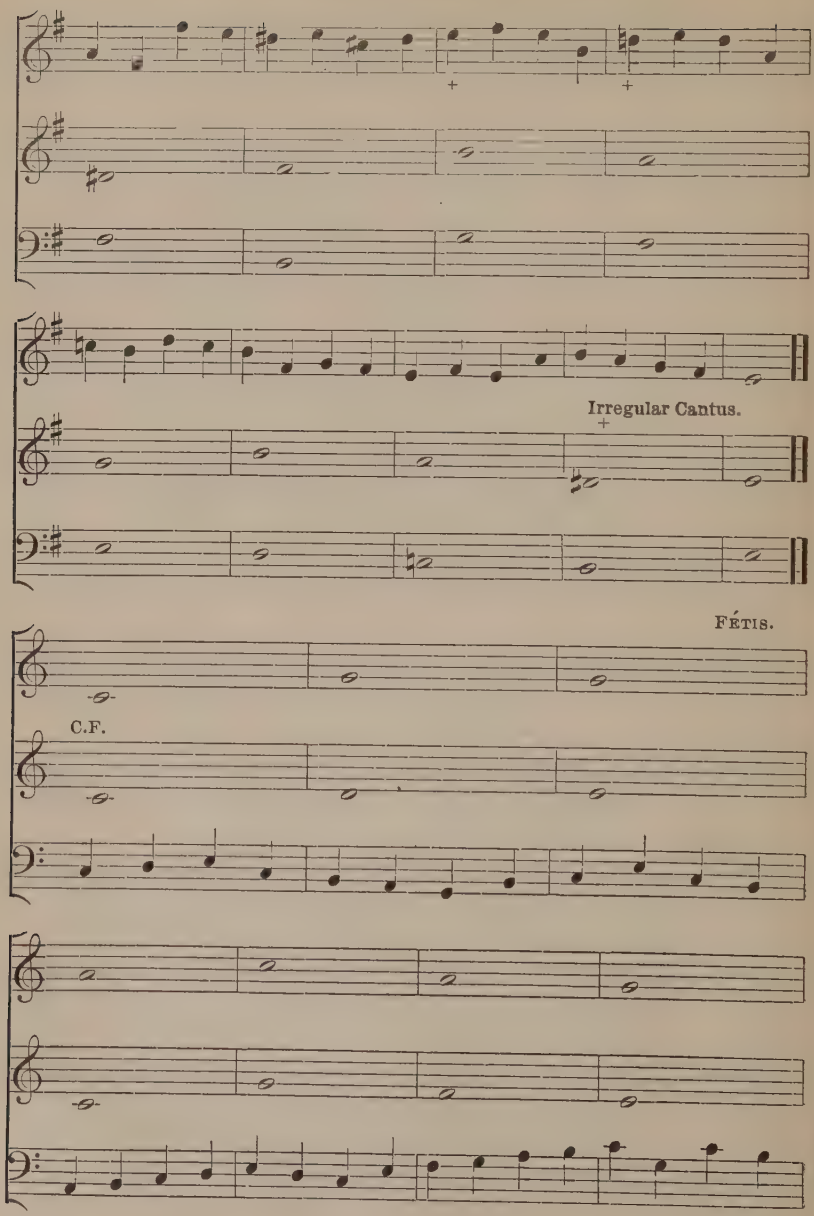
In measure eleven the third of the chord does not appear until the third quarter.

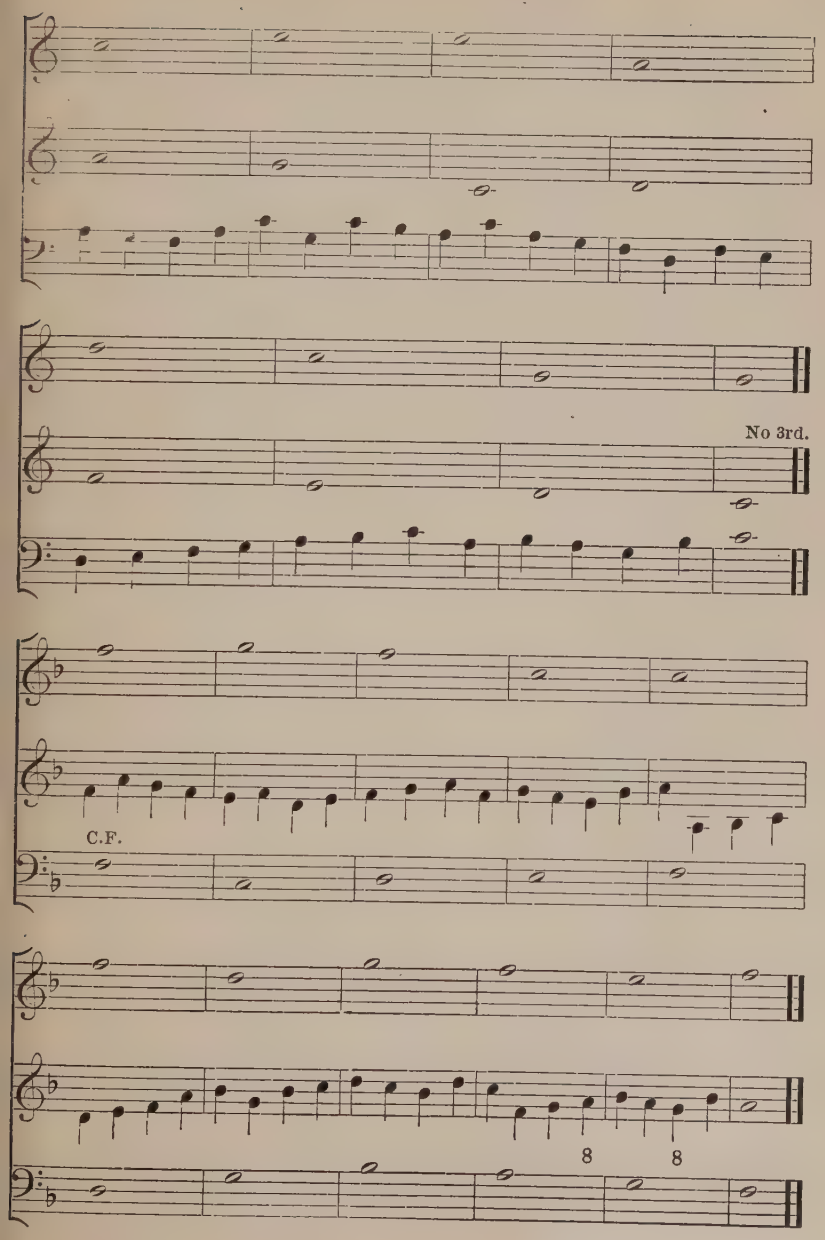




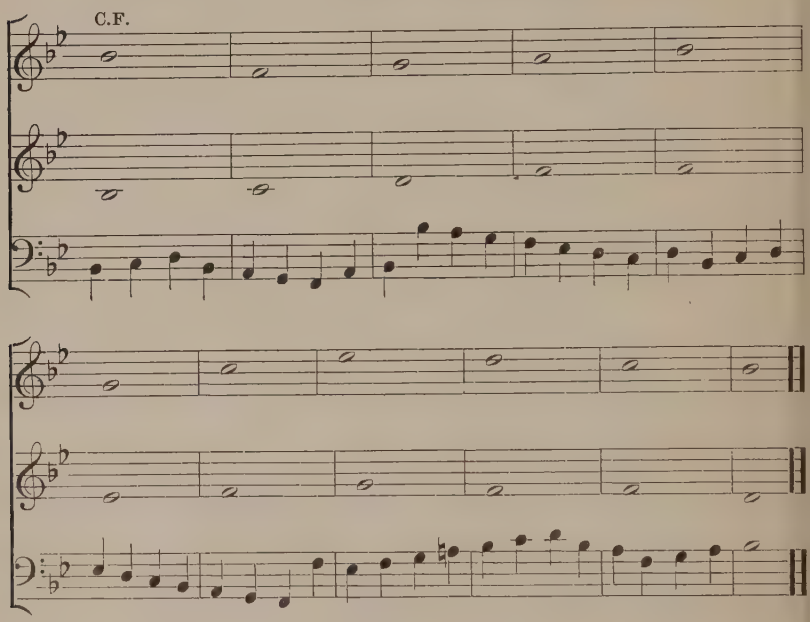
See first note on page 77 for N.B.


FÉTIS.
C.F.
SAUNDERS.
C.F.


Irregular Cantus.
FÉTIS.
C.F.


No 3rd.
C.F.
8
8

In the ninth and tenth measures the octaves, although there are but two quarters between them, produce no bad effect. The case would have been different if the notes forming the octaves had in both cases been the lowest note of the group.



CHAPTER X.

THREE-PART COUNTERPOINT. FOURTH SPECIES.

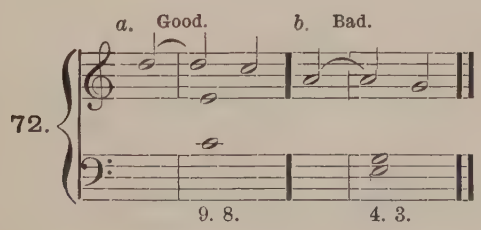
The general observations of Chapter VI still hold good.

The **Additional Part** will be as before in Counterpoint of the **First Species.**

In writing the Fourth Species, it must be kept in mind that **the second half note** in the measure **represents the real harmony** of that measure. For this reason progressions, doublings, omissions, discords, etc., are permitted on the first half of the measure that are forbidden on the first half in the other species. Similarly progressions, doublings, omissions, discords, etc., are here forbidden on the second half of the measure that are allowed on the second half in the other species.

The note taken by the additional part will be determined by the chord that is to appear on the second half of the measure when the suspension is resolved.

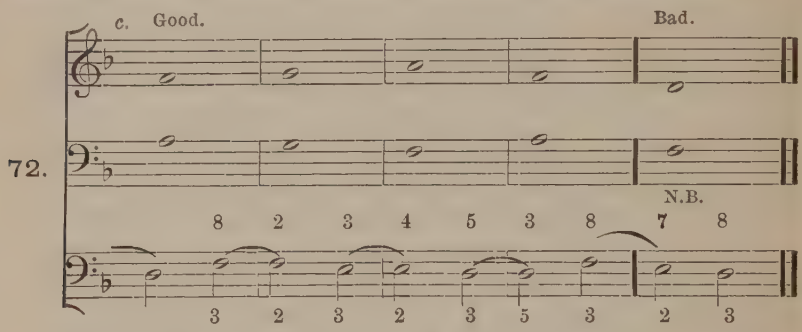
The suspension must always be reckoned between the bass and the part written in the Fourth Species. Thus in Fig. 72*a*, the suspension is between bass and soprano 9, 8, and not between alto and soprano 7, 6. In Fig. 72*b*, it is the suspension of 4, 3 and not 9, 8.



The note of Resolution must not appear in either of the other voices at the same time with **the suspension.** Fig. 72*b*. This

rule does not apply to the suspension 9, 8. The suspension at 72*a* is 9, 8. D in the soprano against C in the Bass is correct, while at Fig. 72*b*, although the suspensions are good of themselves, we must not allow the resolution tone C to appear in the tenor, for the suspension is not 9, 8 on G (which would be correct) but 4, 3 on E.

If the Fourth Species is in the bass, **the suspensions** and resolutions **must be correctly written with both the upper parts.**



Fifths and Octaves on the second half of consecutive measures **are** strictly **forbidden.**

It is allowed to break the syncopation for a measure or two, thus writing in the Second Species. It is also allowed that the part written in the Fourth Species should begin with a rest of a **measure and a half.** It is also allowable to introduce one half rest **in the midst** of the Counterpoint. Mozart is credited with saying that in a case of difficulty in Counterpoint, he introduced a rest or made the leap of the octave.

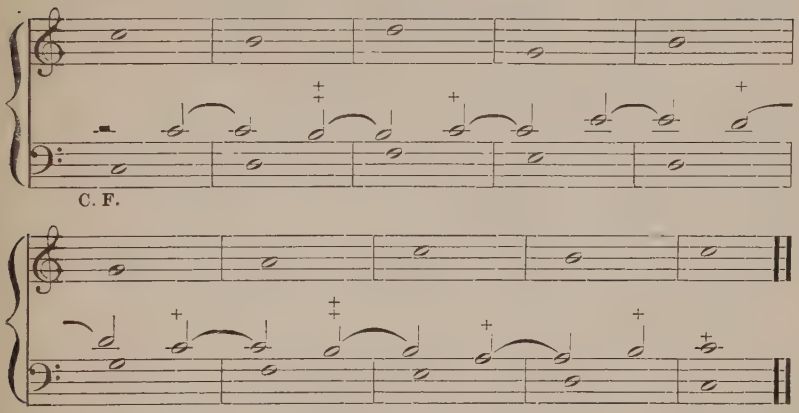
From this point onward it is allowed to introduce a **Pedal Point in the Bass.** This should not extend for many measures and the two upper parts must be written strictly according to the rules of two-part Counterpoint – as if the bass part did not exist.

The Pedal Point must begin and end with a concord.

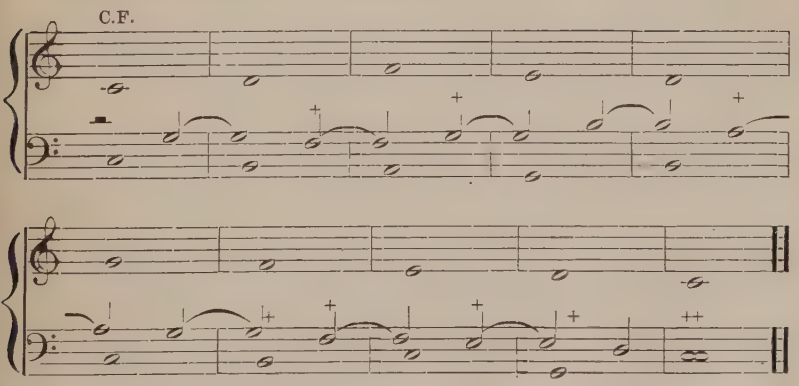
The Pedal Point should be either the Tonic or the Dominant tone.

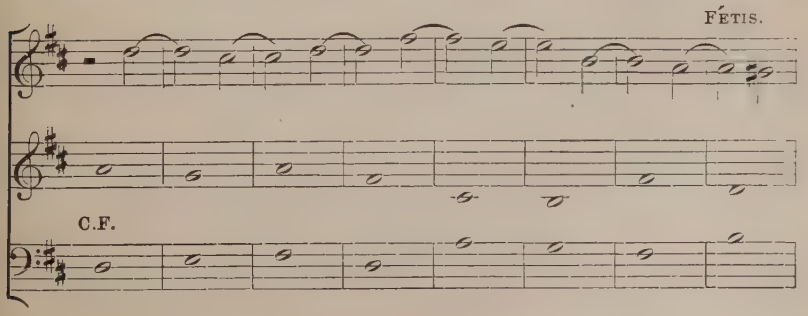
The two following illustrations are full of errors. The others are intended as models.

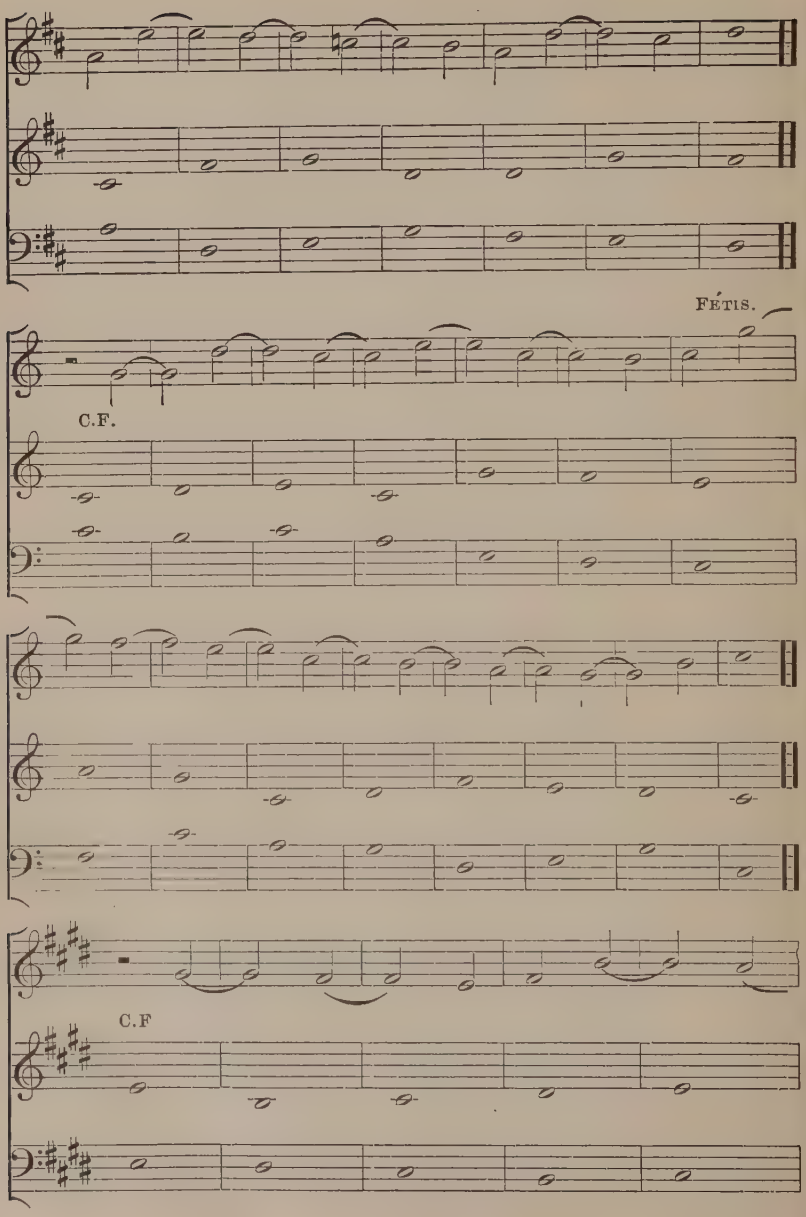
Find the errors in the following:

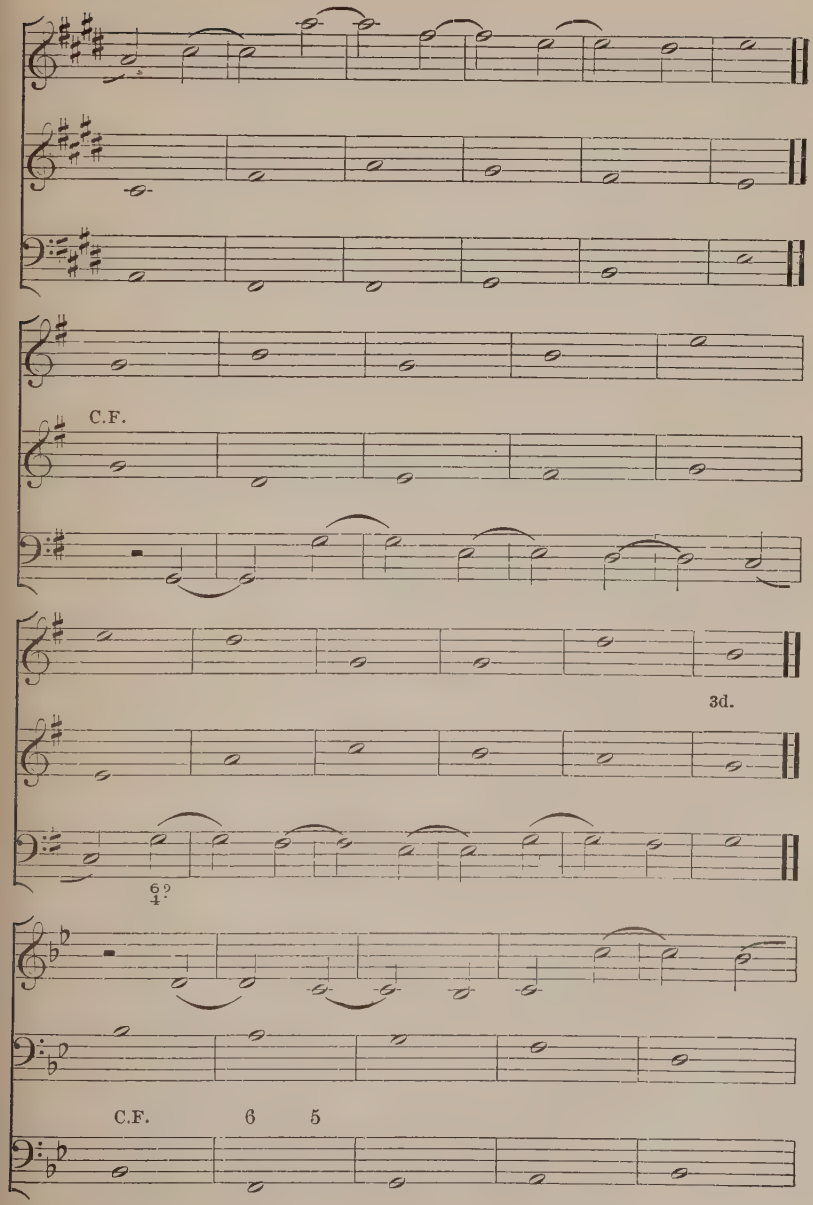


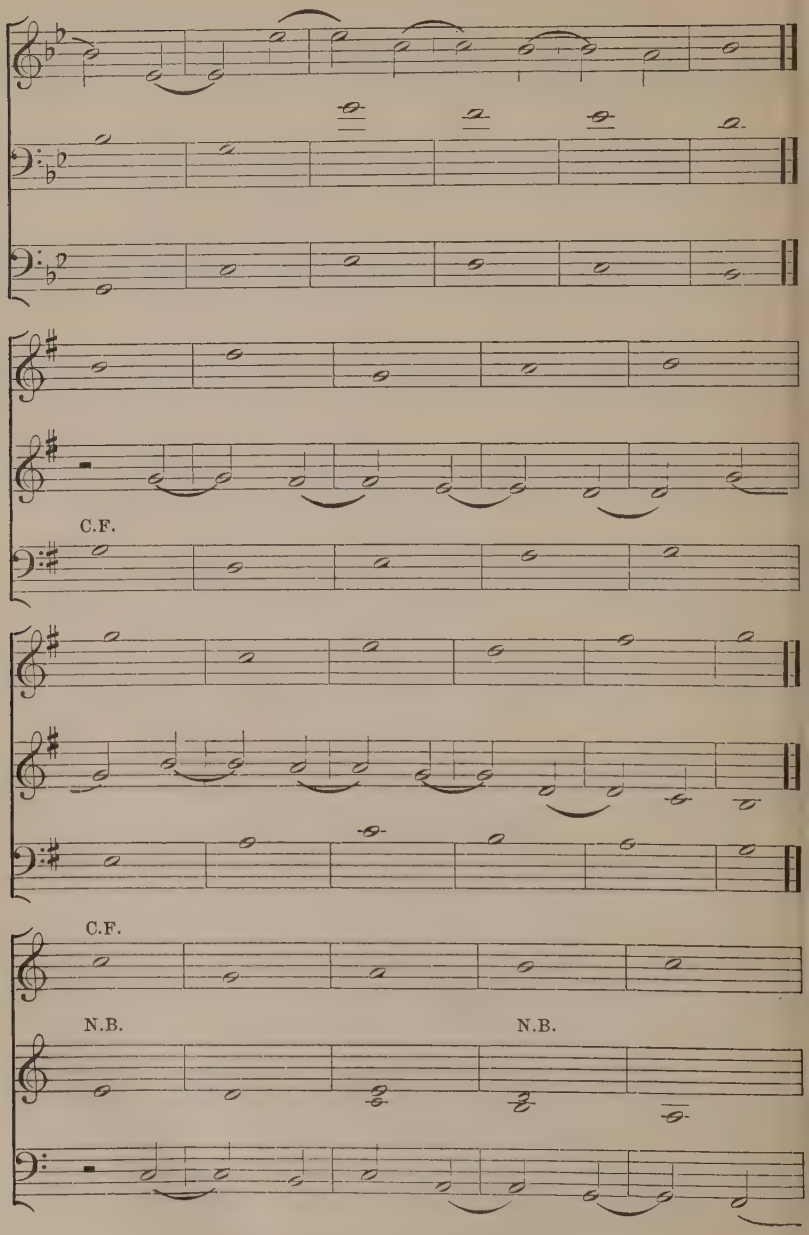
Find the errors in the following:

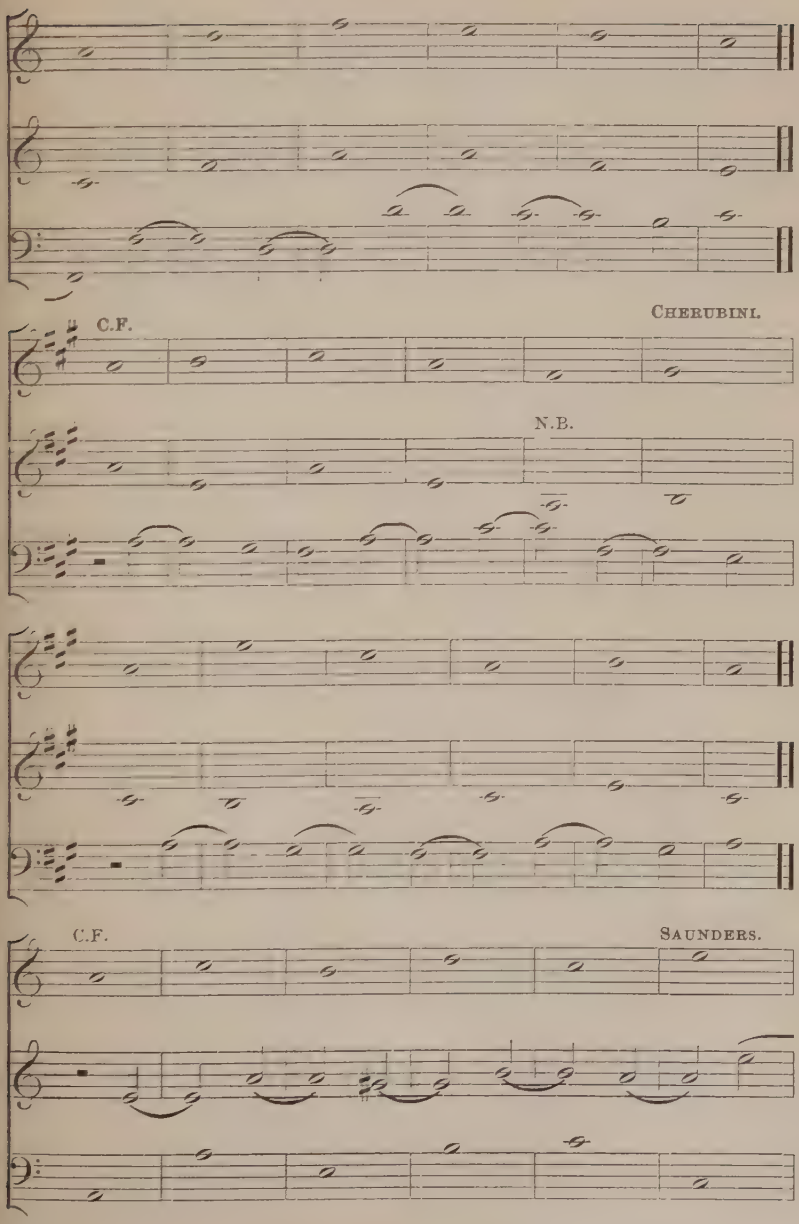


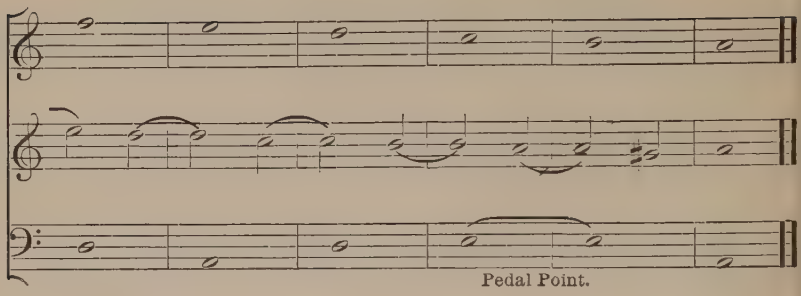



FÉTIS.
C.F.
C.F


C.F.
3d.
6?
4
C.F.
6
5


C.F.
C.F.
N.B.
N.B.


C.F.
CHERUBINI.
N.B.
C.F.
SAUNDERS.


Pedal Point.

CHAPTER XI.

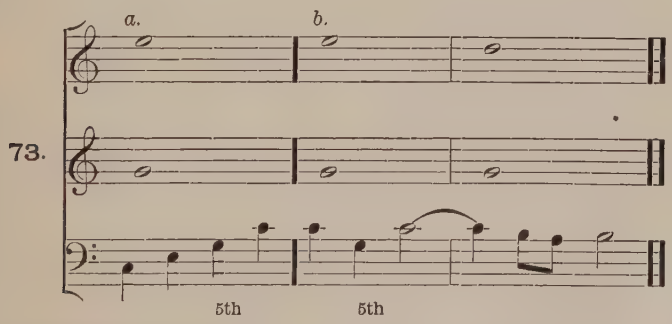
THREE-PART COUNTERPOINT. FIFTH SPECIES.

The rules in Chapter VI apply so far as the three parts are concerned. The motion of the Counterpoint in the Fifth Species is governed by the rules of the Fifth Species in Two Parts.

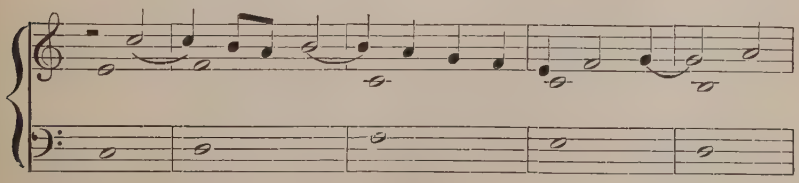
The Additional Part in the First Species should be written as in the preceding forms.

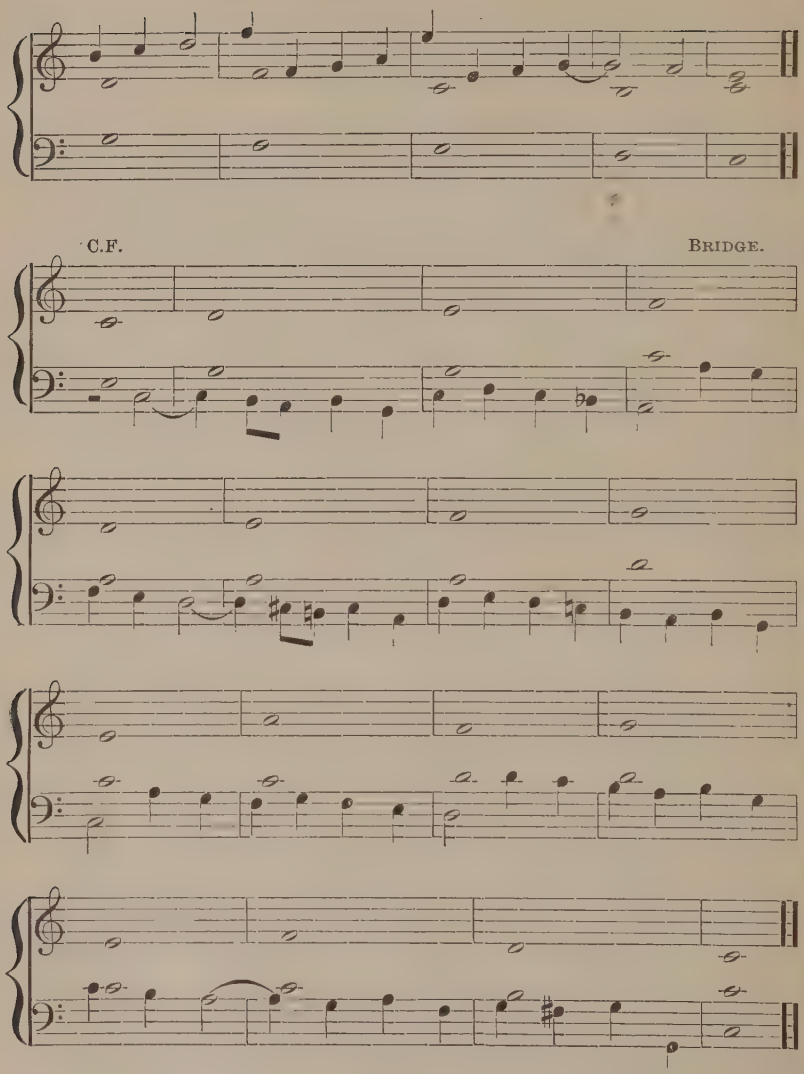
The rule regarding the c-position or $\frac{6}{4}$ chords is here slightly relaxed. Fig. 73*a*, although introducing the fifth of the chord in the bass and on the third quarter is regarded as correct. It has, however, the disadvantage of the arpeggio progression which is best avoided. **(Principle of Variety.)**

Fig. 73*b* is a similar use to that mentioned in Chapter IX, page 75.

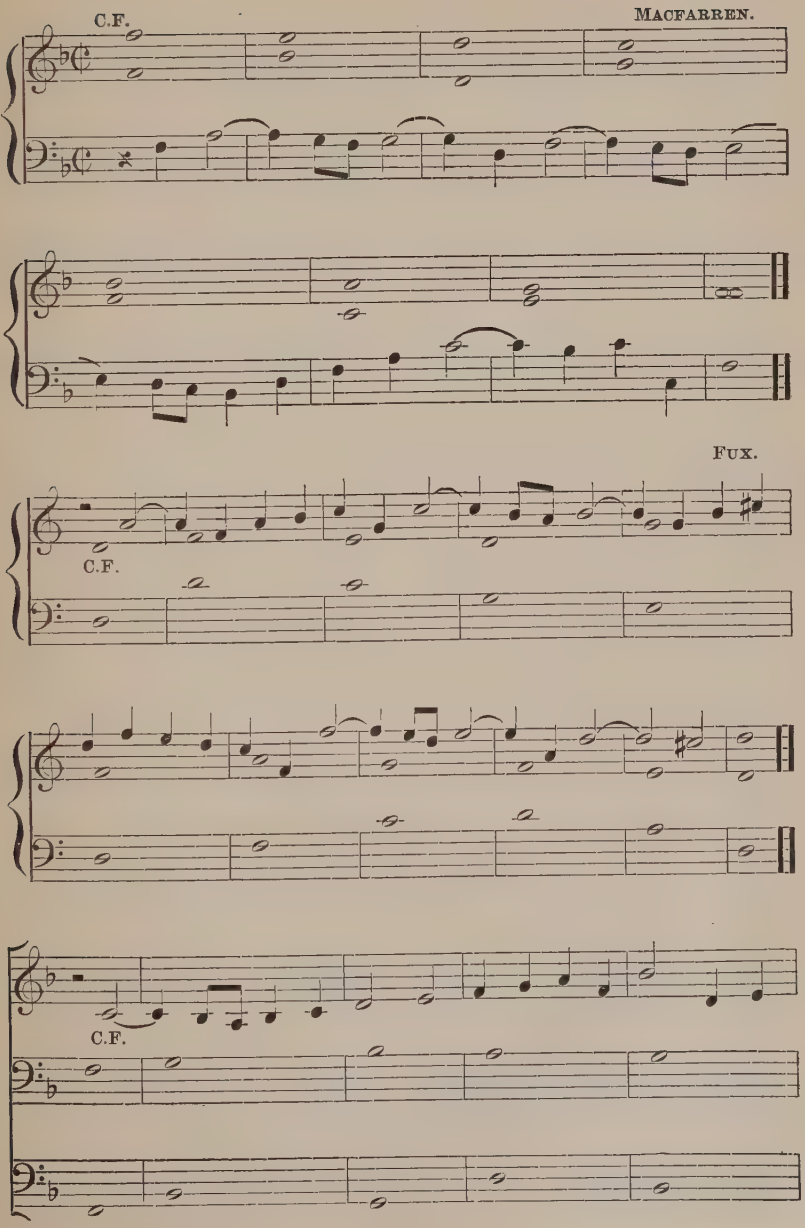


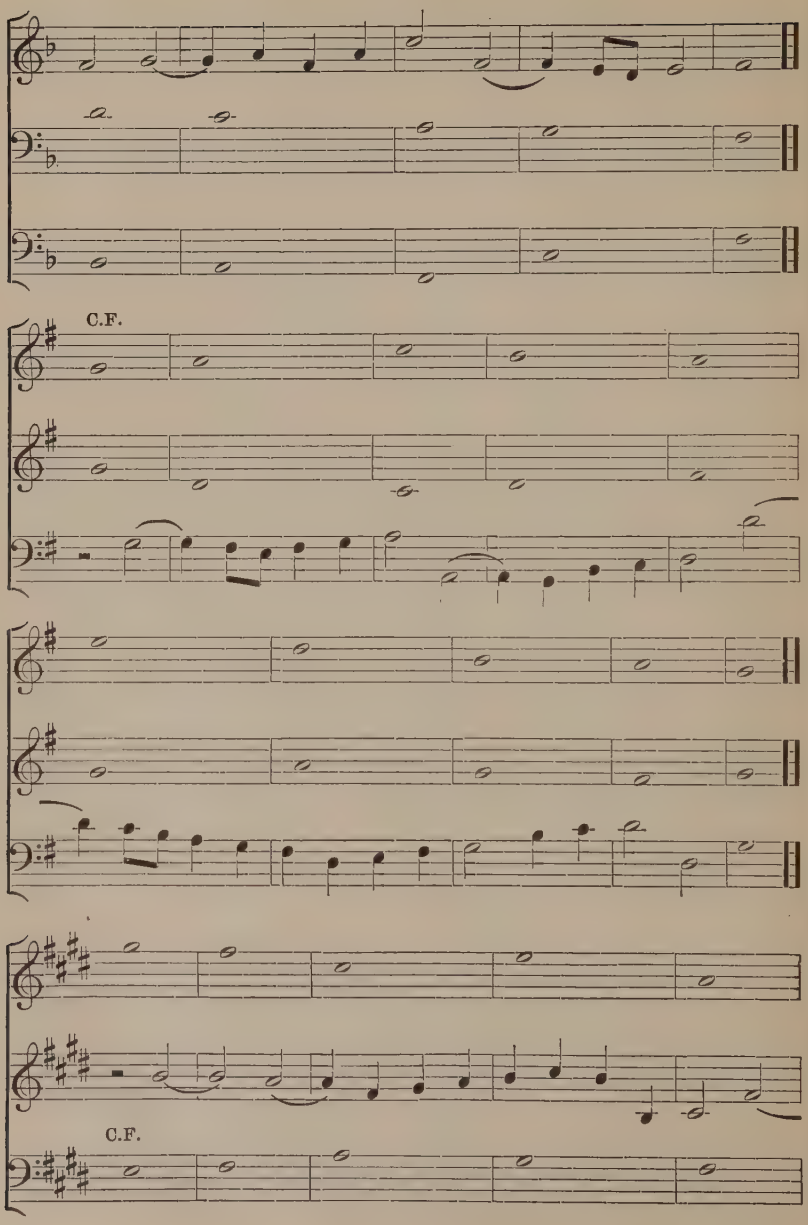
The student should find and correct the errors in the following illustration. The other illustrations are intended as models.

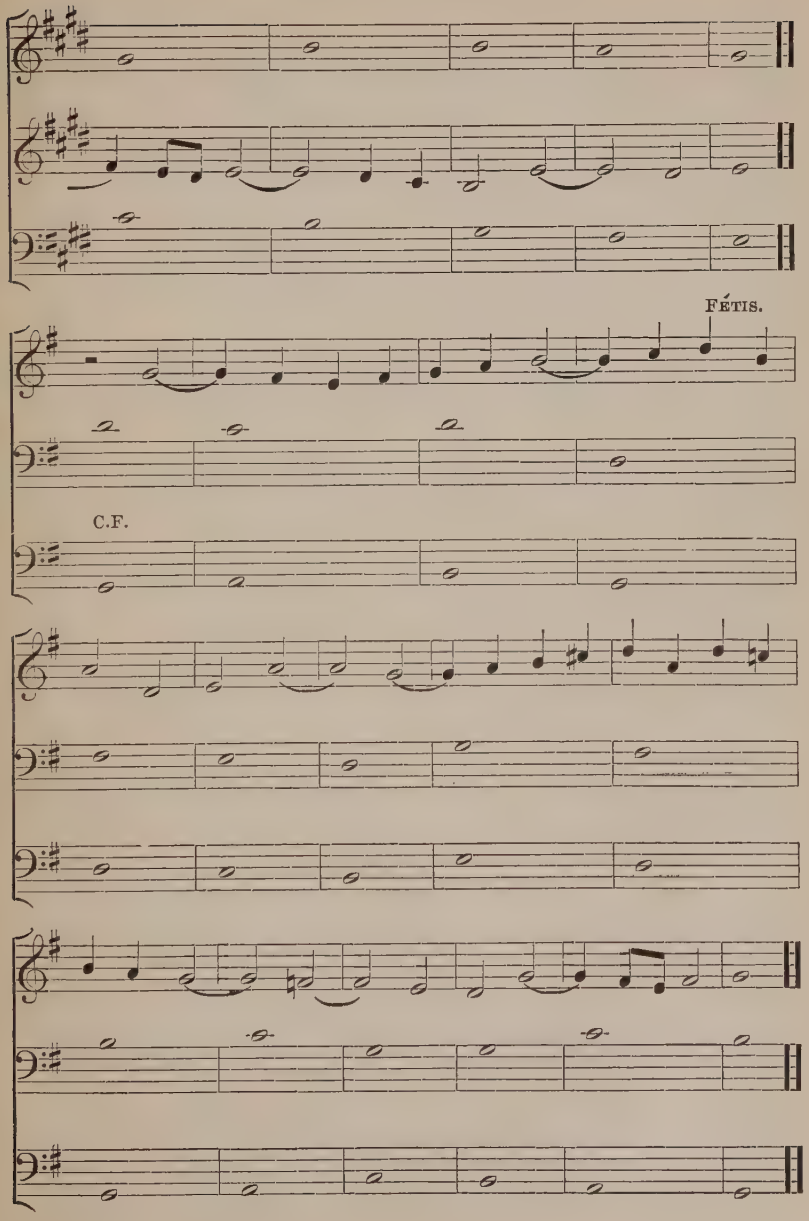


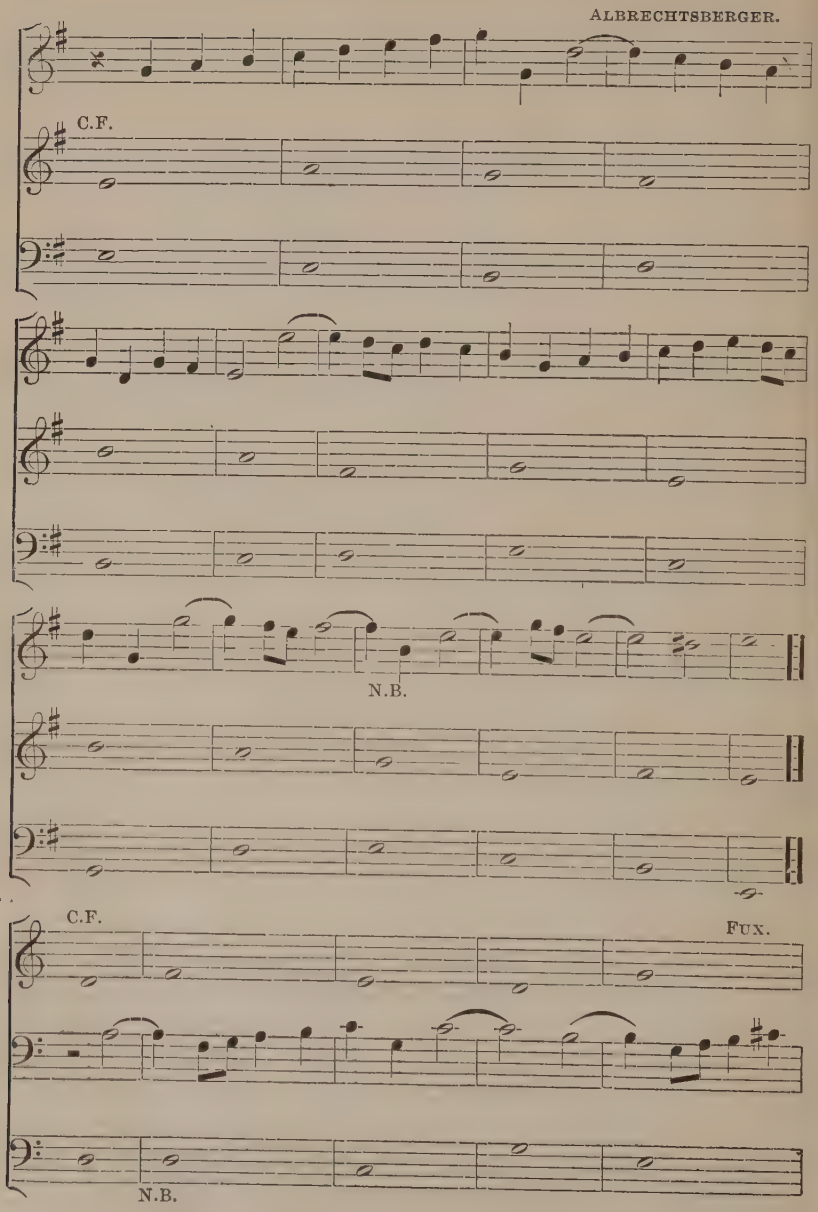


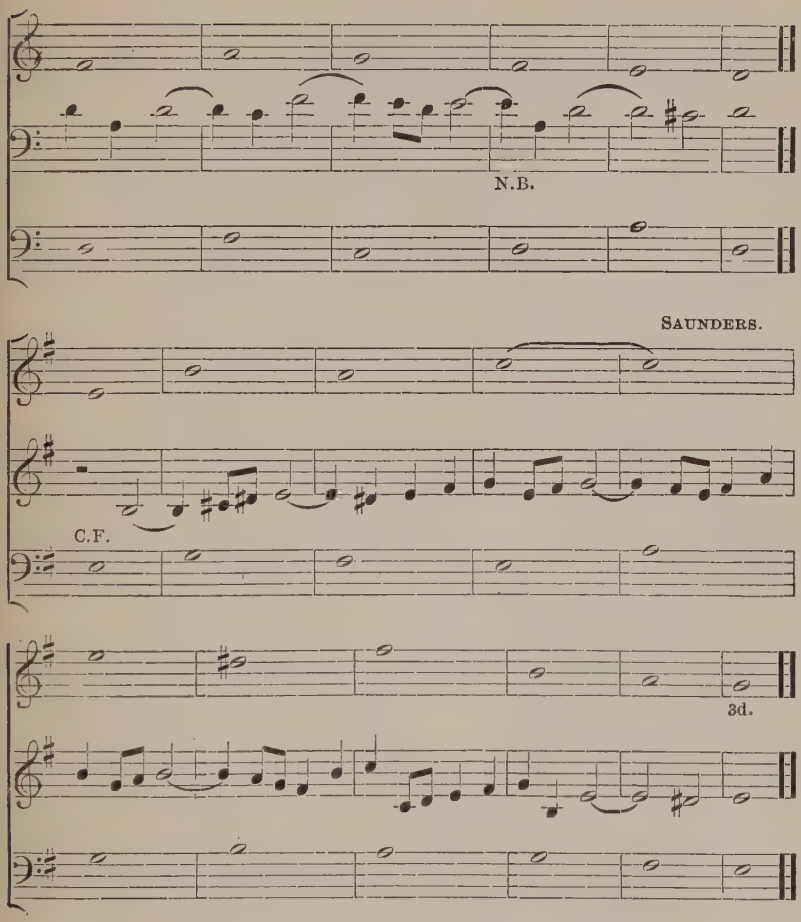
Beginning with the third of the chord lowest is not to be recommended. Neither are the constant repetitions in the Tenor. More suspensions are also desirable.


C.F.
MACFARREN.
FUX.
C.F.
C.F.


C.F.
C.F.


FÉTIS.
C.F.


ALBRECHTSBERGER.
C.F.
N.B.
C.F.
FUX.
N.B.


N.B.
SAUNDERS.
C.F.
3d.

CHAPTER XII.

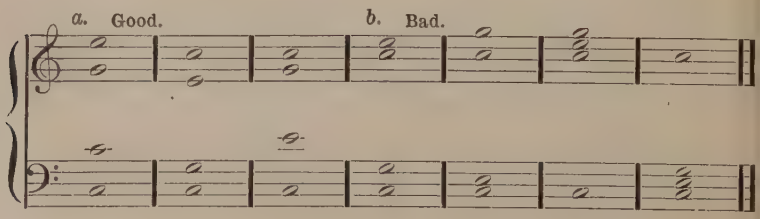
FOUR-PART COUNTERPOINT.

In **Four-Part Counterpoint,** we have a melody given (Cantus Firmus) to which we are to fit **three** new melodies (counterpoints). It is usual to write the Cantus Firmus and **Two Additional Parts** in the First Species, the fourth part may then be written in any of the five Species. It is this form that we will study first.

Four-Part Counterpoint in the First Species differs little from simple four-part Harmony. Only the chords already given, however, may be used and each voice should have more individuality than is necessary in Harmony. Thus, repeating a note is not advisable, nor should we follow the rule in Harmony that a tone in common between two chords should remain in the same voice.

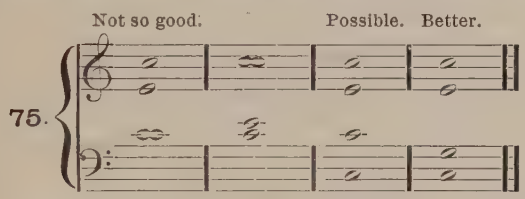
It is generally best to **write as if for a quartette** of mixed voices, Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass, and each part should not exceed the range of the voice for which it is written. In any case, whether written for mixed quartette, for ladies' voices (first and second Soprano, first and second Alto), or for mens' voices (first and second Tenor, first and second Bass), the voices should be about equidistant. If they are not, the resulting harmony will be thin and weak, the quartette will split into two duets or into a solo and trio. However, if a wide interval must exist anywhere, it is least objectionable between Tenor and Bass. Fig. 74*a*, *b*.

74.



Each chord should contain **three different notes** and the **unison should be avoided,** i. e. each chord should be **complete** and each voice should have a tone of **different** pitch. Fig. 74*a*, *b*.

It is possible, though not desirable and seldom necessary, to omit the fifth of the chord when the chord is uninverted.

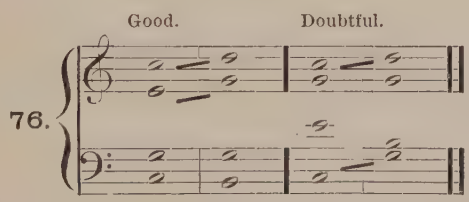


As in Harmony, the root is the best tone to **double,** the fifth next and the third least, but in **minor chords the third** may be doubled freely. The leading tone is **not to be doubled.** As in three-part writing, the first, fourth and fifth of the scale are the most satisfactory tones to double in all chords. (**Principle of Euphony.**)

Parallel Fifths and Octaves are forbidden between any two parts.

Fifths and Octaves by contrary motion are scarcely better.

Concealed Fifths and Octaves are used more freely than in two or three part writing, but should be avoided especially between the outer voices. Concealed octaves at the Cadence are common between outer voices.



The first and last measures may contain either a complete chord, only Octaves and Unisons or a chord with either third or fifth omitted.

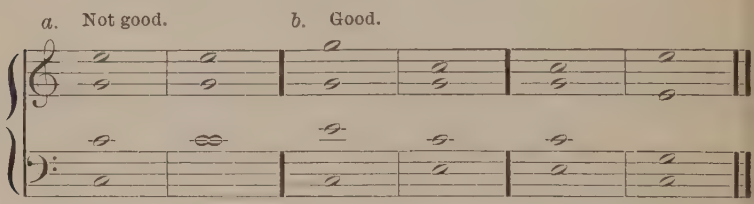
It is best that **the last note** in the highest voice be **the key note,** but either note of the I chord may be used.

When the Cantus is in the Bass the penultimate chord is VII°. When the Cantus is in an upper voice, the penultimate chord is usually the V_a.

The repetition of a note is to be avoided, but a single repetition (not more) in the inner parts is entirely good. Repeated notes in the Soprano give a very weak effect and in the Bass they should be treated as a Pedal Point. (**Principle of Variety.**)

A Change of Harmony between successive measures is desirable; if not possible there should be sufficient motion of the voices to give interest to the progression. (**Principle of Variety.**)

77.



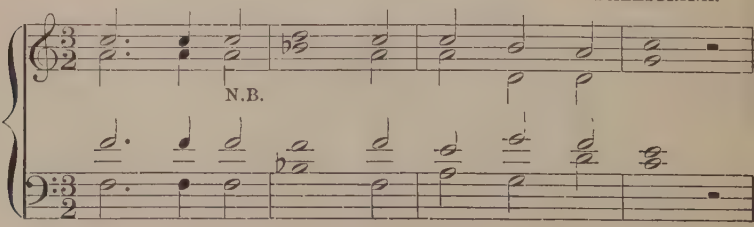
Crossing and Overlapping of parts is sometimes necessary, but should be used very sparingly. No part should cross the lowest. (**Principle of Clearness.**)

There is no necessity for any extended explanation of the different Species in four-part writing. The rules given under two and three-part writing are sufficient.

The student should write a very large number of exercises in Four-Part Counterpoint in each of the five Species. The greatest freedom of motion in each voice combined with the smoothest harmonic progressions should be his aim.

PALESTRINA.

78.



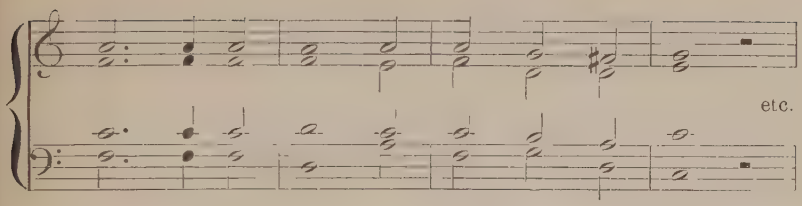
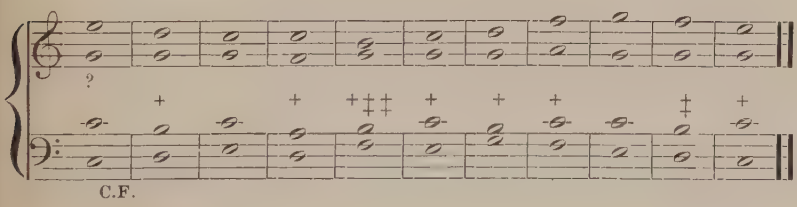
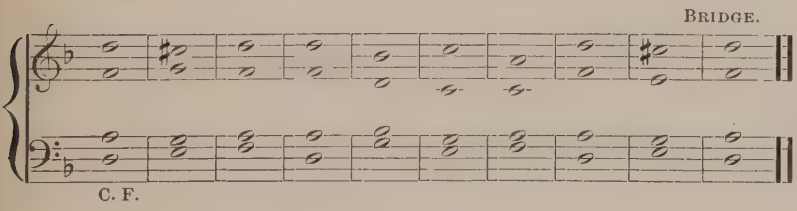


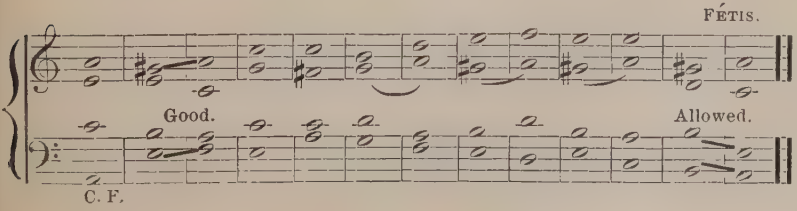
Fig. 78 is part of a Gloria by Palestrina, written in four voices, First Species. The repeated notes are made necessary by the words to which they are fitted. Notice at N.B. how the Tritone is avoided by introducing B-flat.

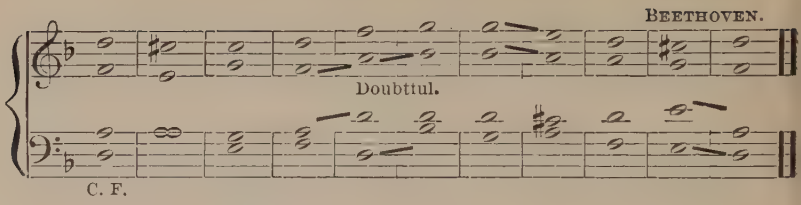
The following will serve as models, both as to what should be avoided and what should be imitated.

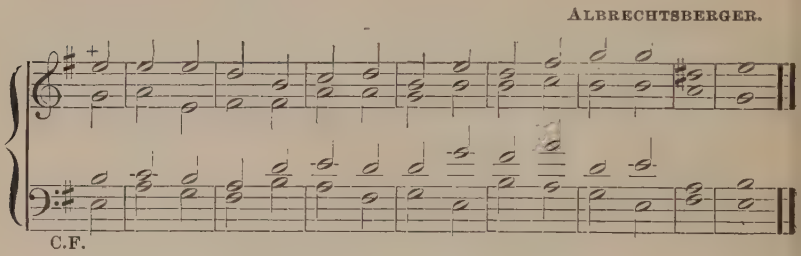
Find and correct the errors in the following. Notice also the poor voice leading.



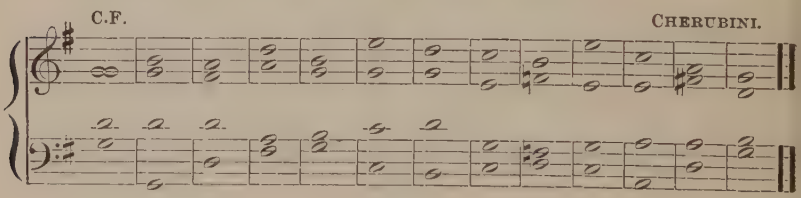


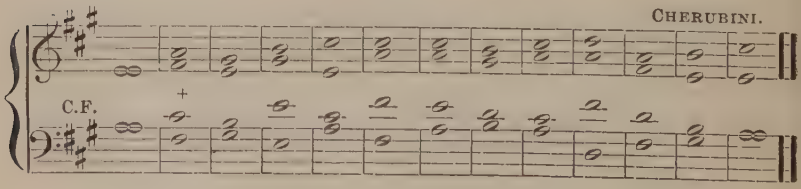


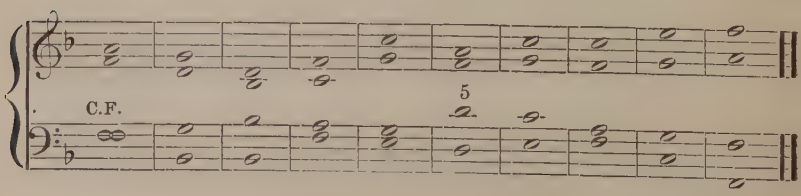


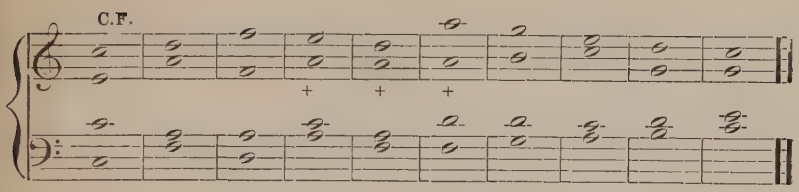


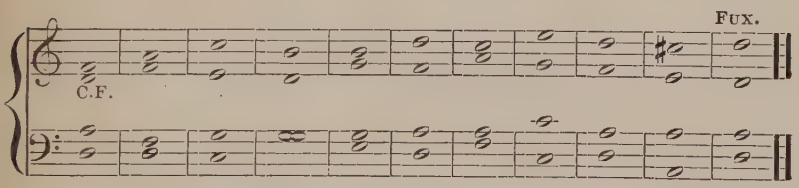
Since we have note against note the above is in the First Species although it is written chiefly in half notes.



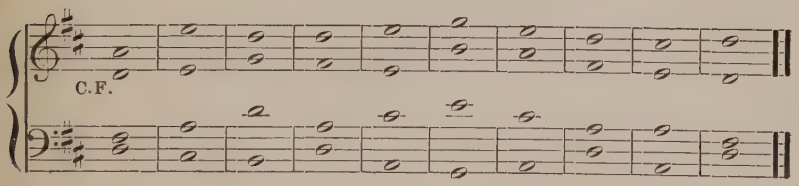


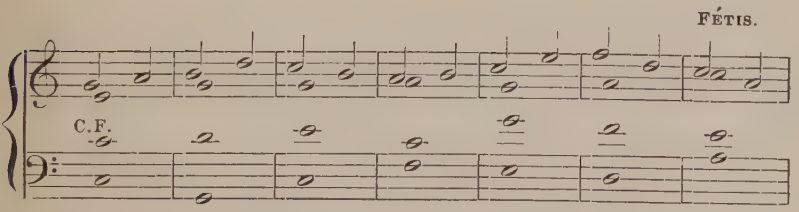


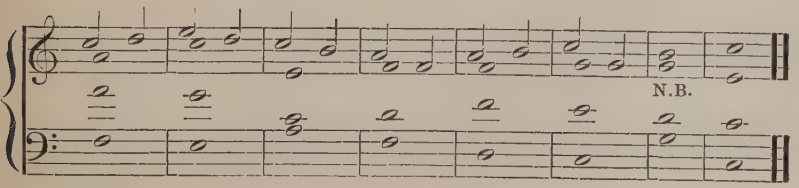


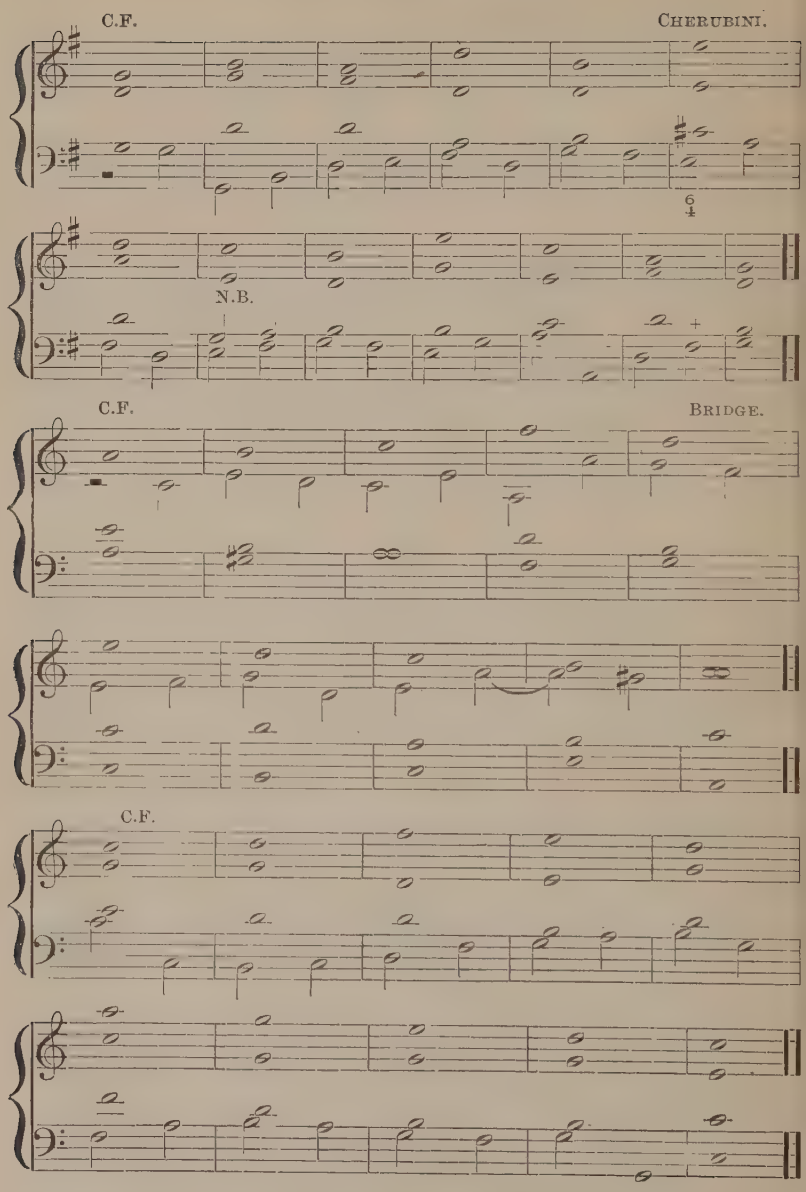


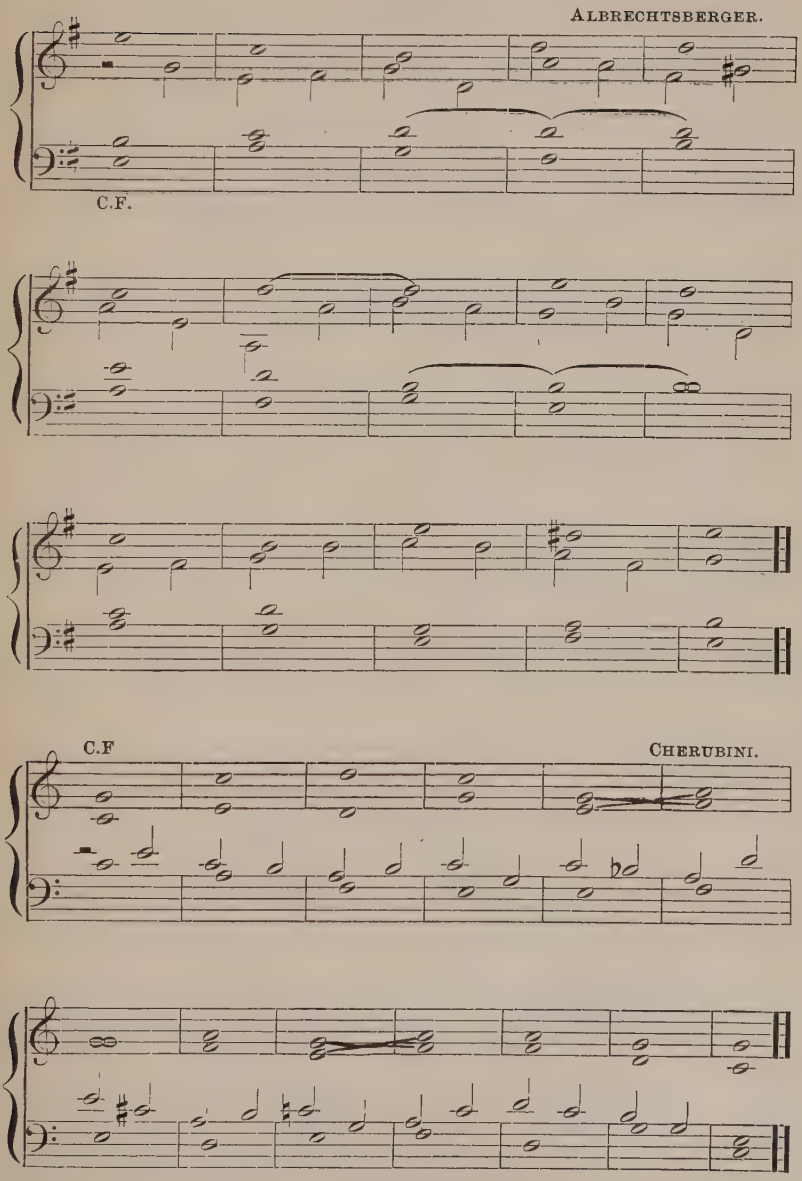
The Tenor is somewhat monotonous and there are more repetitions than is desirable.



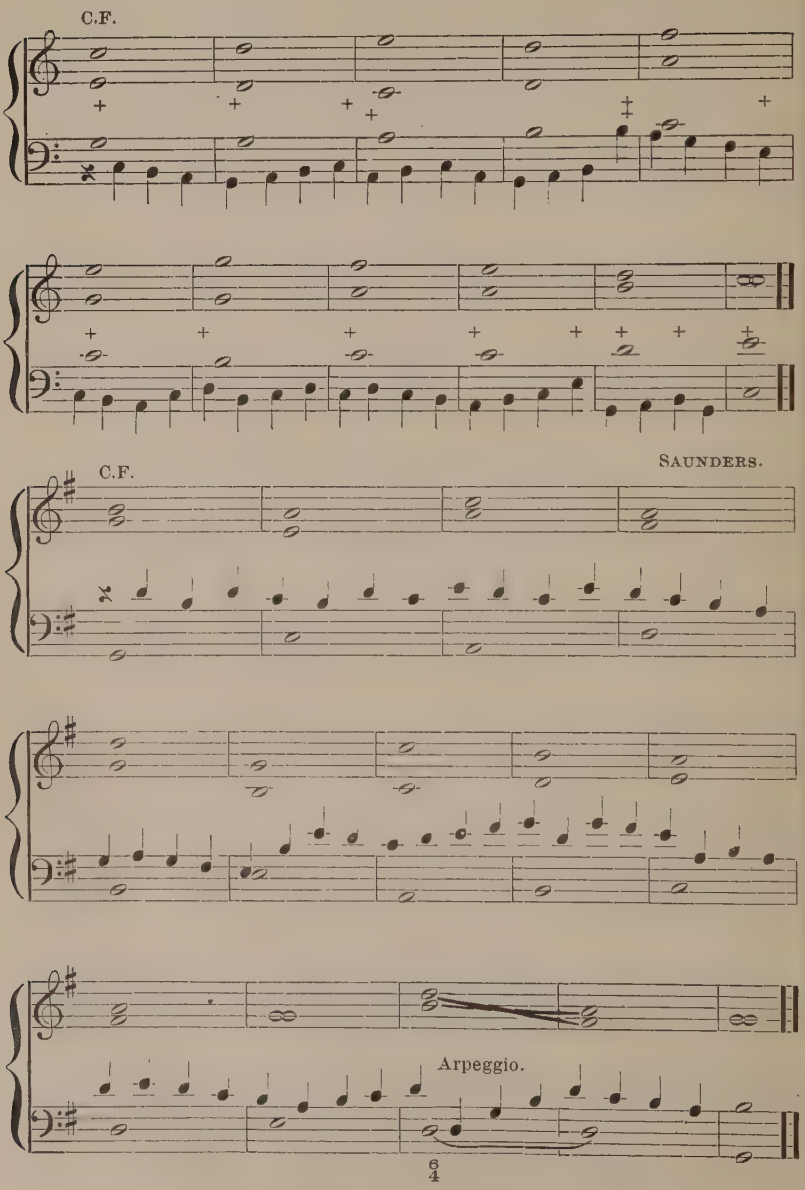


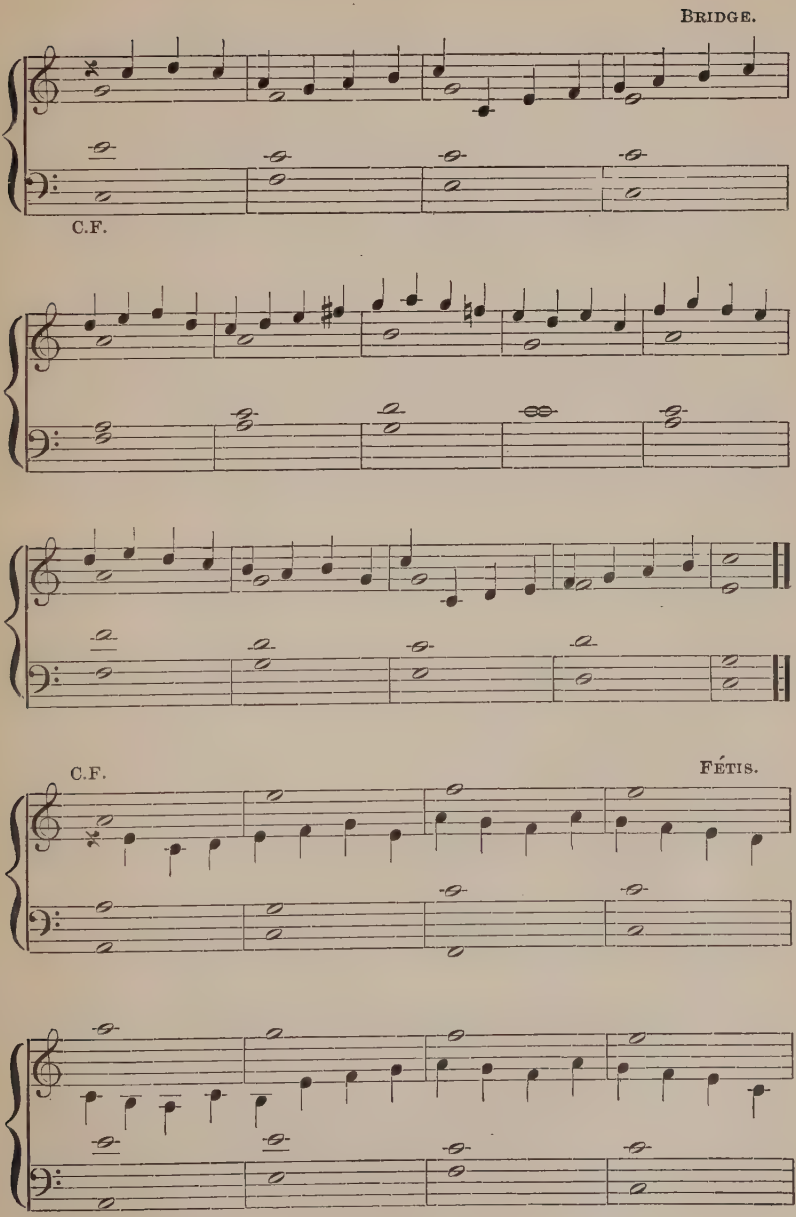


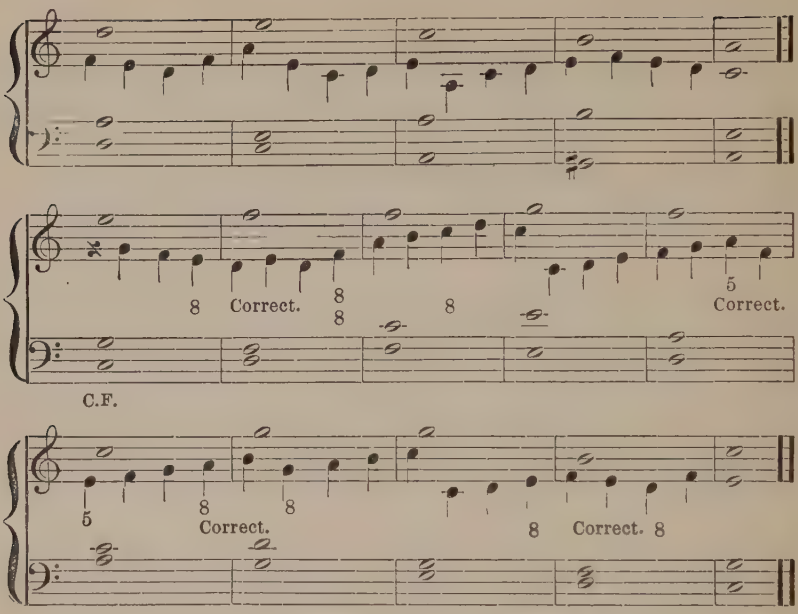

C.F.
CHERUBINI.
N.B.
C.F.
BRIDGE.
C.F.


ALBRECHTSBERGER.
C.F.
C.F
CHERUBINI.

Correct errors in the following.

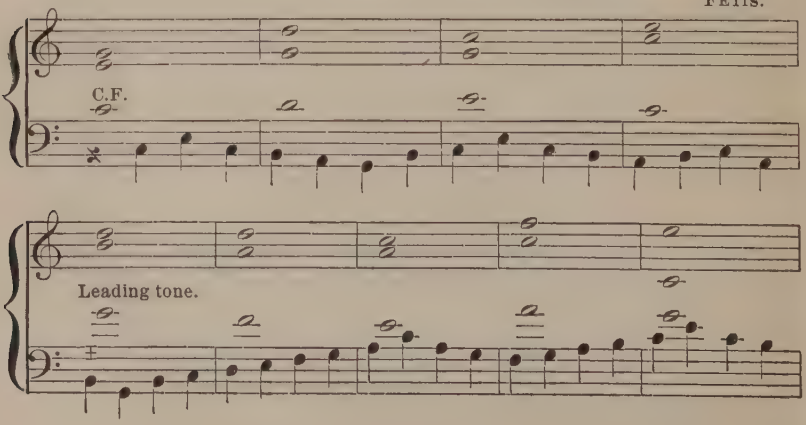


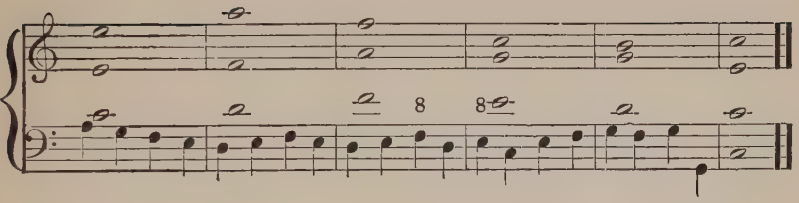

BRIDGE.
C.F.
C.F.
FÉTIS.

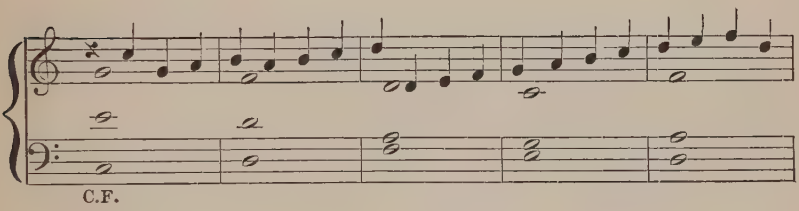


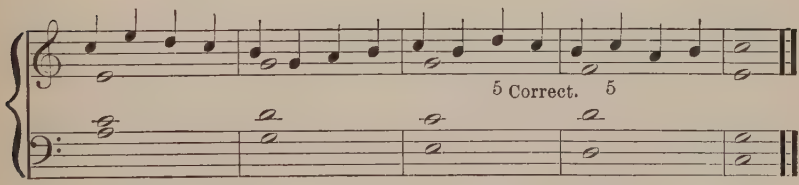
The above, though far from being a model counterpoint, illustrates the possibility of using octaves and fifths with fewer than four quarters between. The student must not use such progressions freely.

FÉTIS.

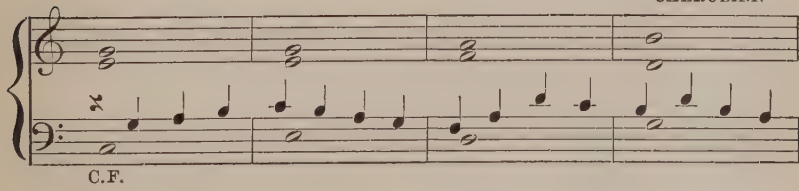


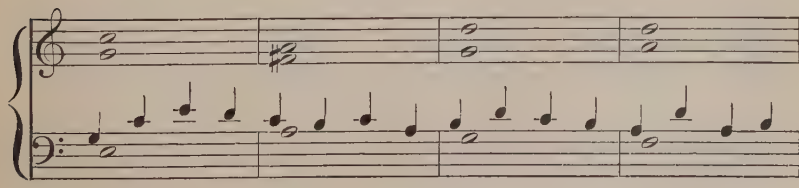


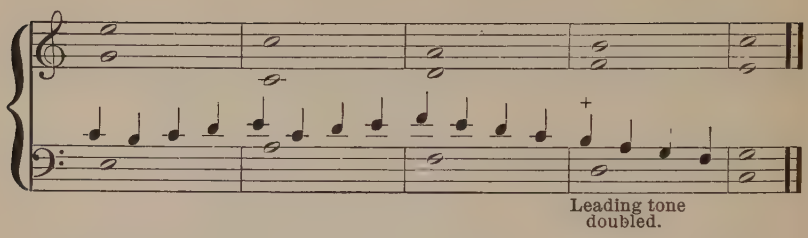




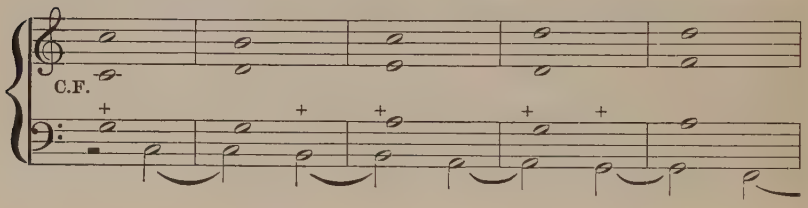
CHERUBINI.

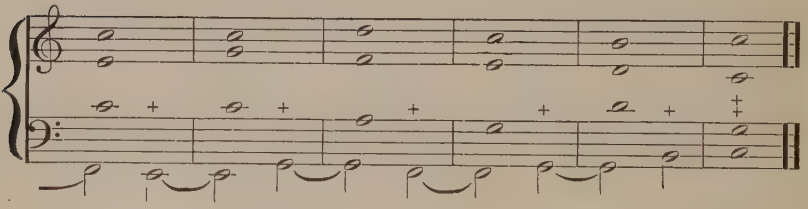


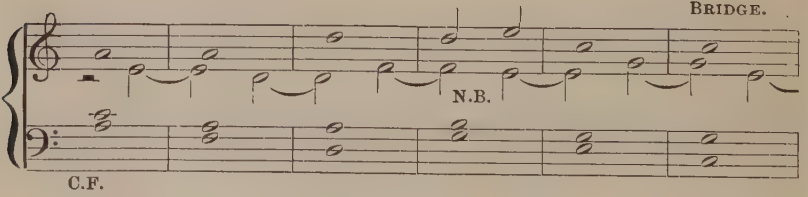


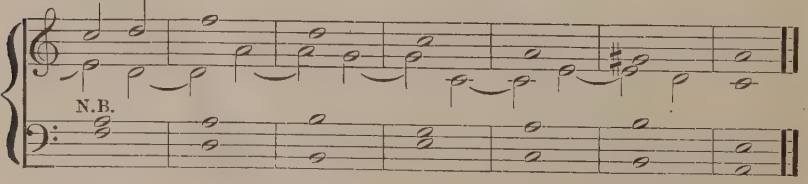


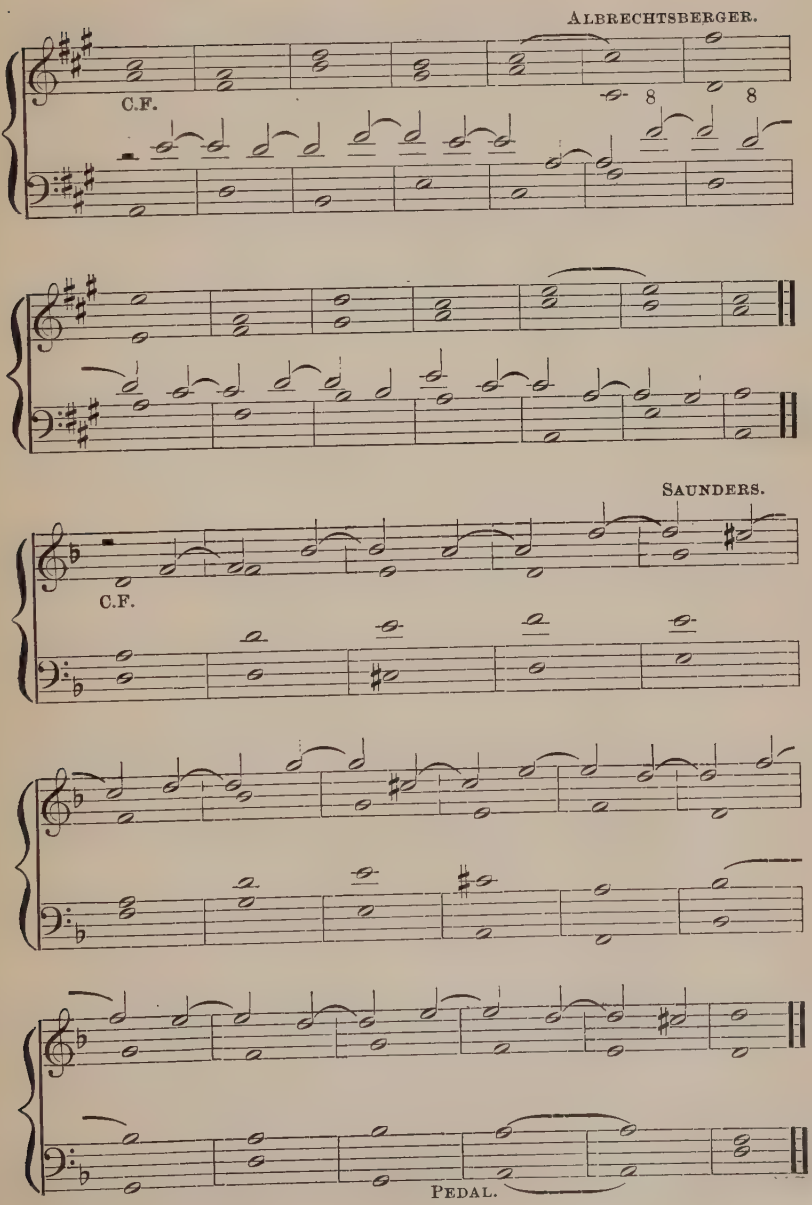
Correct errors in the following. Notice 7–8 in third measure.

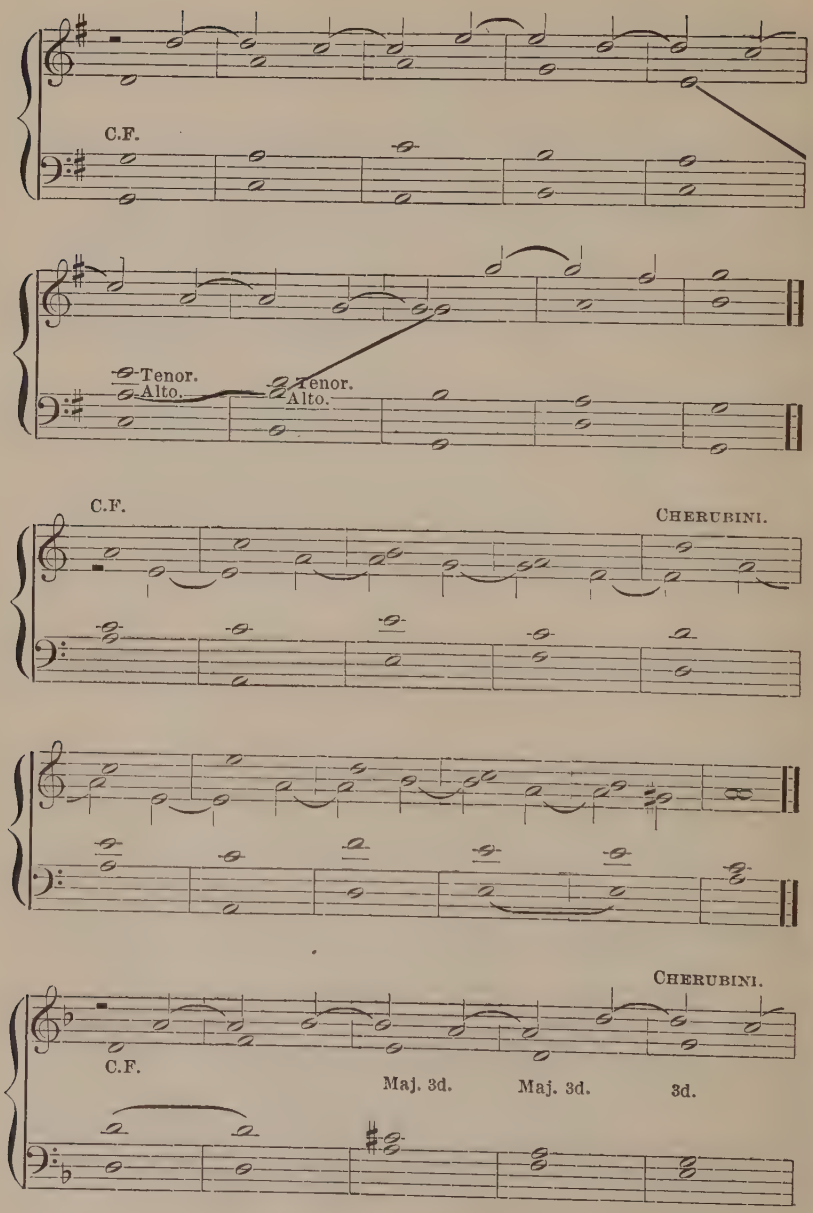


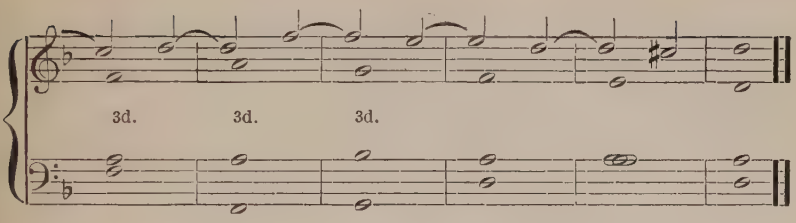




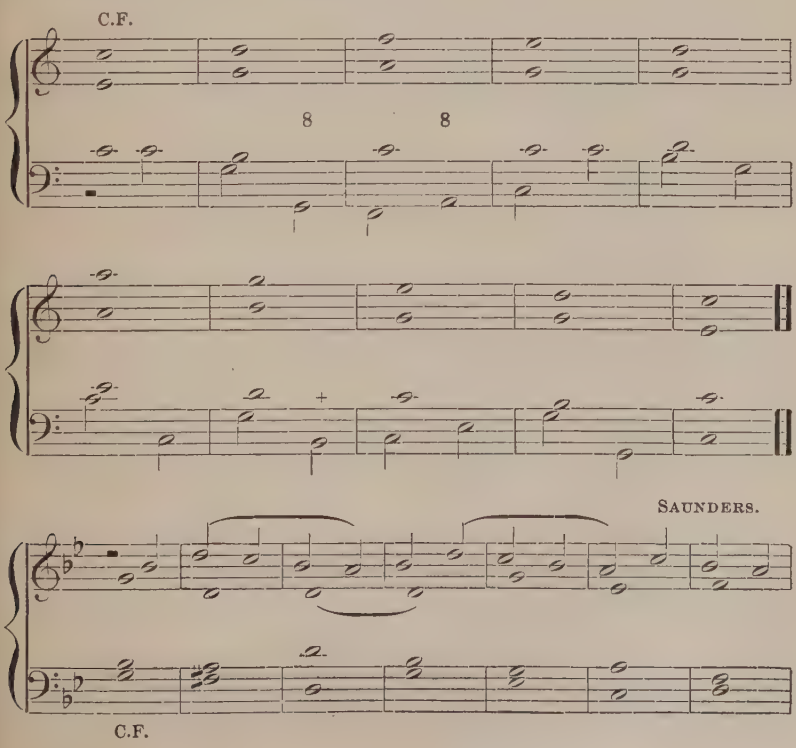


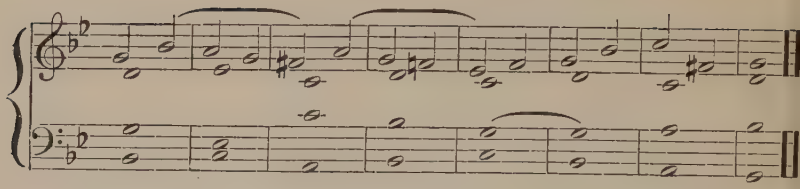

ALBRECHTSBERGER.
C.F.
8
8
SAUNDERS.
C.F.
PEDAL.


C.F.
Tenor.
Alto.
Tenor.
Alto.
C.F.
CHERUBINI.
CHERUBINI.
C.F.
Maj. 3d.
Maj. 3d.
3d.

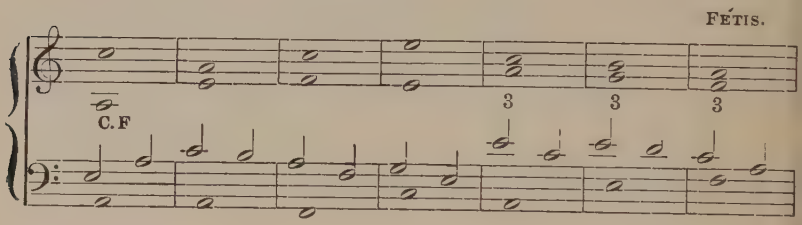


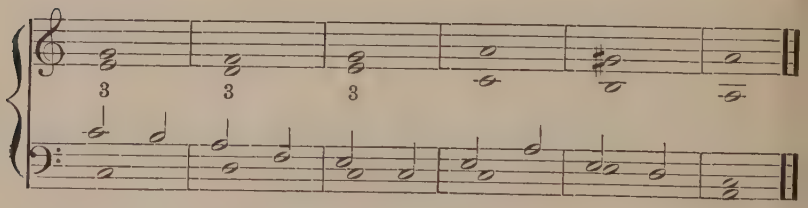
The following Counterpoint though violating perhaps but one rule (doubling the leading tone) is very poor. A Counterpoint written in the second species loses all interest if no dissonant tones occur on the second half of the measure. Redistributing the chord by means of harmonic tones in the moving part can never produce good Counterpoint.

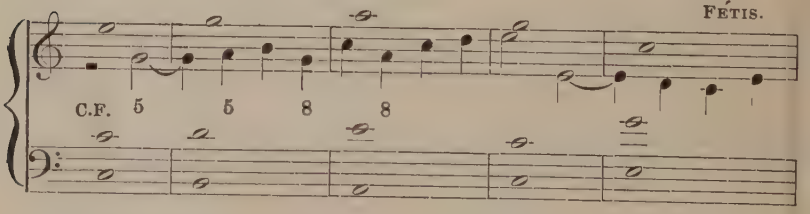


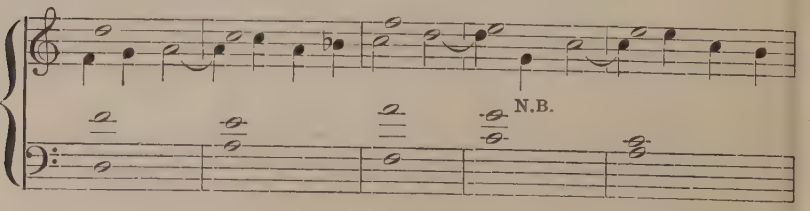


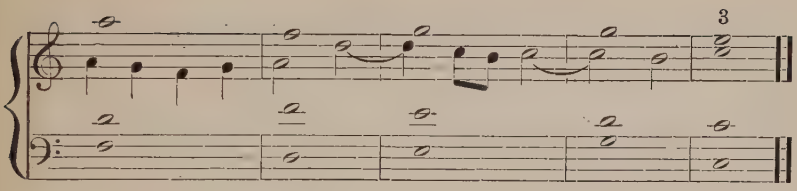
The repetition of the same figure is not to be recommended.

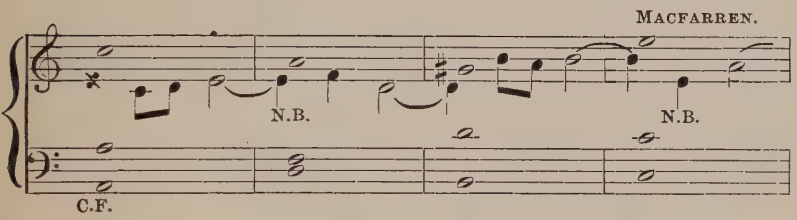


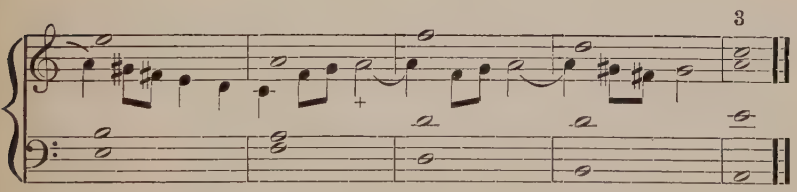




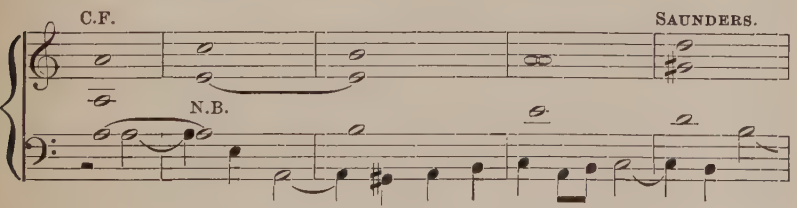


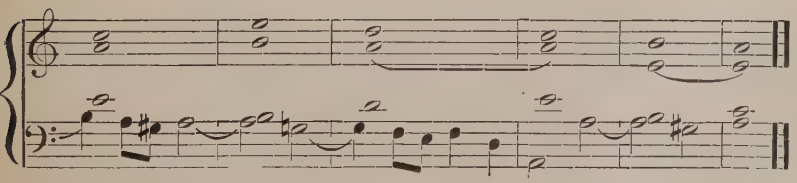






Notice the ornamental resolution. In the 6th measure the unison approached by degrees is not to be imitated.





CHERUBINI.

C.F.

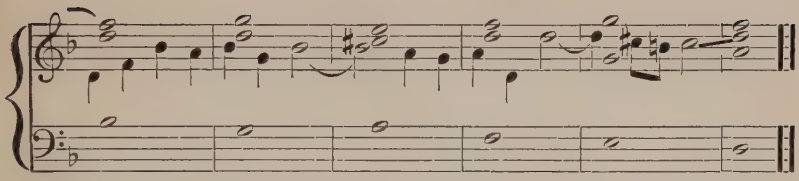
The concealed 5th between Soprano and Bass, measure 3–4, the ending with the third of the chord in Soprano, the Bass crossing the Tenor, measure 7, and the poverty of invention in the Tenor of measures 6 and 7, should be noted.

C.F.

FUX-OUSELEY.

BEETHOVEN.

C.F.



Notice the monotonous Alto in the first five measures, the extraordinary range of the Tenor, the final 3d in Soprano, and the ending with voices crossed.

CHAPTER XIII.

FIVE OR MORE PARTS. VARIOUS SPECIES.

Counterpoint may be written in any or all of the five Species **in five or more parts.** It is not usual to write for more than eight voices. Even eight-voiced Counterpoint is generally written in the form of two sets of four-voiced Counterpoint to be performed together, as by a double choir of four parts each. The perverse ingenuity of the monks of the Middle Ages led them into writing Counterpoint for as many as one hundred real parts, but it is quite unnecessary to call attention to the uselessness of such writing.

The principal difference between four-part Counterpoint and that in five or more parts is that greater freedom is constantly allowed as the number of voices increases.

In writing for more than four parts the voices should be doubled in the following order: First add a second Soprano (five parts), then a second Tenor (six parts), then a second Alto (seven parts), then a second Bass (eight parts).

Concealed Fifths and Octaves, not between outer parts, are allowed. Between outer parts they may be used if the Soprano moves by degrees and the Bass by a leap.

Parallel Fifths and Octaves are always forbidden, but in five or more parts consecutive octaves and more rarely fifths are sometimes found in **contrary motion.**

Avoid repeating a tone in all species except the first.

It is perfectly allowable and even necessary for the inner parts to cross each other frequently.

Overlapping cannot always be avoided.

There are no new chords available.

Dissonances should be approached and left by degrees (with the exceptions already given).

It is sometimes necessary to approach the Unison by Parallel

Motion, but a **second should not go to a unison** unless the voices are crossing.

The **leading tone may not be doubled in less than six parts.**

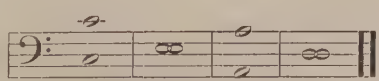
When writing the Fifth Species, whole, half or quarter rests may be used.

The final chord must be complete.

If the Cantus is in the Bass, the penultimate chord is the VII°. When the Cantus is in any other part the penultimate chord is the V_a.

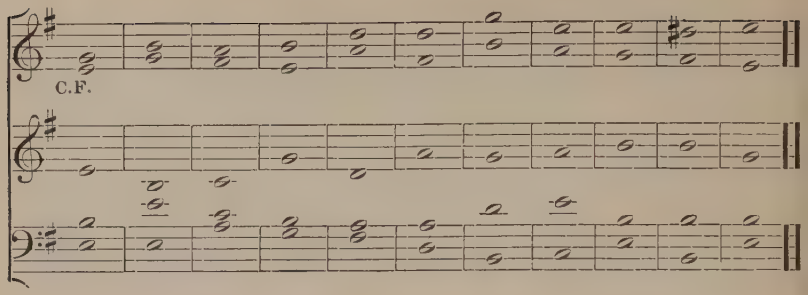
It is possible to write examples of Counterpoint in five, six, seven or eight parts using the Second, Third or Fourth Species in one part, the other parts being in the First Species, but the benefit is scarcely proportionate to the difficulty. The student should write examples of Counterpoint in five, six, seven and eight parts all in the First Species and then drill himself thoroughly in writing with the same number of parts, but setting the Counterpoints all in the Fifth Species. The value of such training can not be over-estimated.

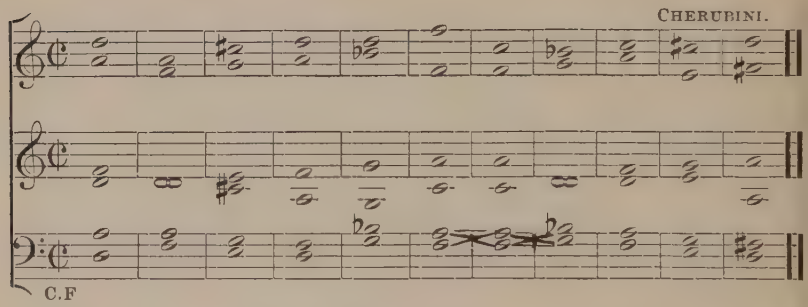
When writing in eight parts the progression of octave to unison and **vice versa,** or from octave to octave, or from fifth to fifth in contrary motion is allowed. This is especially useful in the two Bass parts as follows:

79a. 

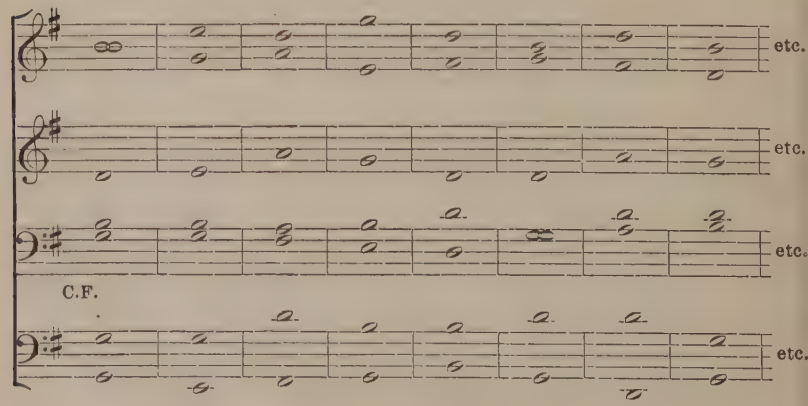
The following examples are written only in the First and Fifth Species.

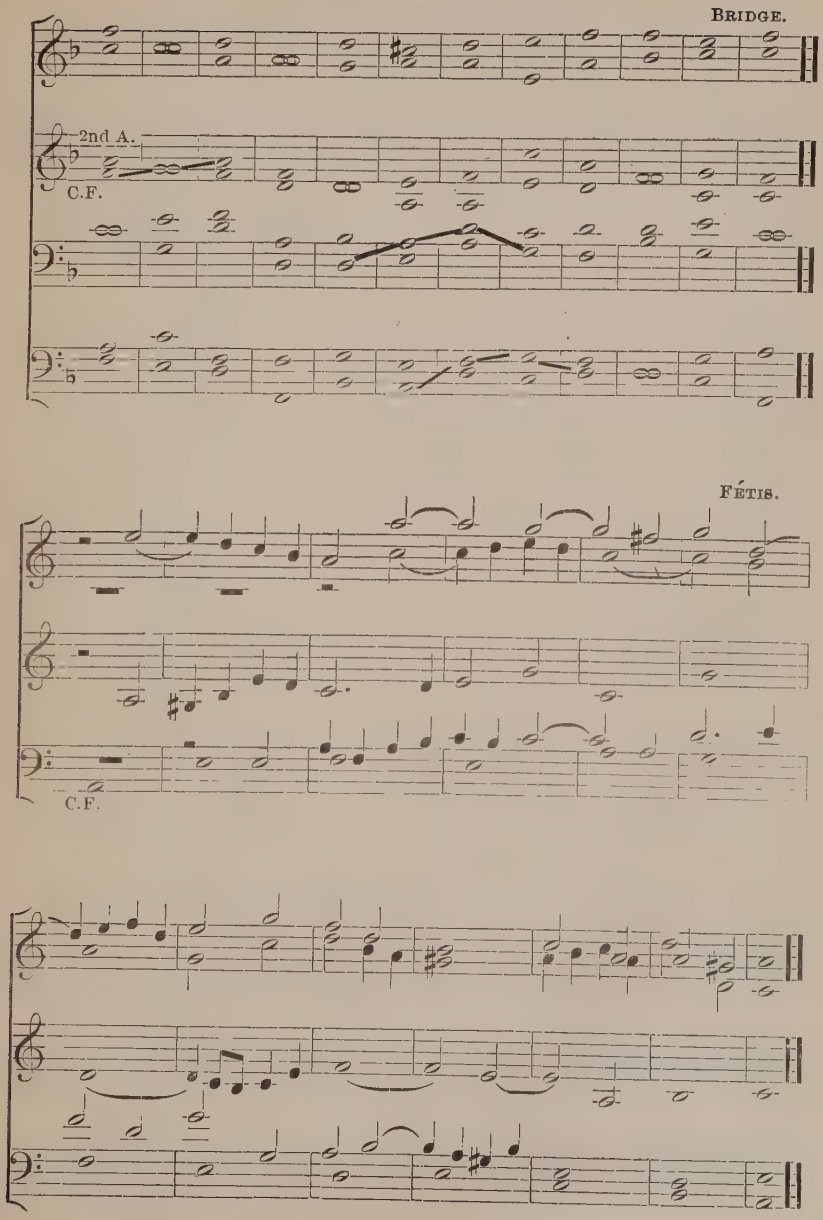
When writing more than four parts, in order to make the progression of each part clear, it is necessary to use more than two staves. It is again recommended to the student that he write all his exercises with a separate staff for each voice. This will not only assist in individualizing each voice in the student's mind, but will be of great advantage later in score reading.





The following is the first eight measures of a seven part Counterpoint using "Old Hundred" as the Cantus (Tenor II). The student should complete the counterpoint for the other twenty-four measures.




BRIDGE.
2nd A.
C.F.
FÉTIS.
C.F.

CHAPTER XIV.

THREE OR MORE PARTS. COMBINED COUNTERPOINT.

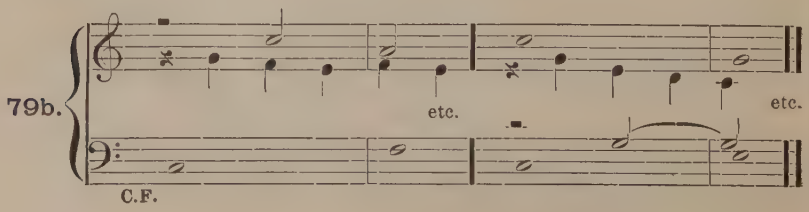
The five species of Counterpoint may be combined in a variety of ways. Such combinations are the most interesting and may be the most artistic of all the ways of writing Counterpoint.

We will consider some of the ways of combining the different Species.

In three-part Counterpoint, we may have against the Cantus (which is always to be present and which is in the First Species as before,) two parts in the Second, Third, Fourth or Fifth Species; one part in the Second and one in either Third, Fourth or Fifth Species; one part in the Third and one in the Fourth or Fifth; one part in the Fourth and one in the Fifth Species. The Cantus itself and any Species of Counterpoint may be in any voice. This gives rise to some seventy-five different arrangements of the Cantus and the different Species.

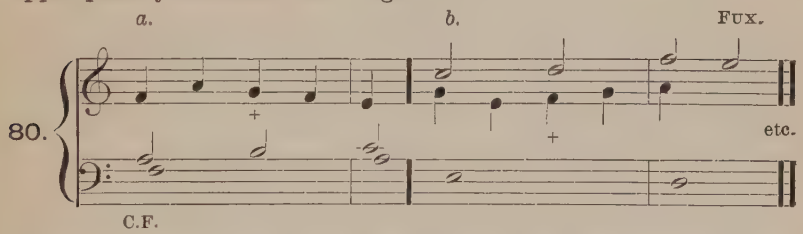
In the same way, when writing four-part Counterpoint, we may combine Counterpoints of each species with Counterpoints of any Species, giving rise to numberless arrangements.

When writing in several species, the parts may enter at different times, one Species in the first measure, one in the second, etc., but as a rule, the part having the Second or Fourth Species will enter on the third beat of the first measure, and the part having the Third Species will enter on the second beat of the first measure



In general the rules already given will govern the movement of each voice. The following suggestions will be found helpful.

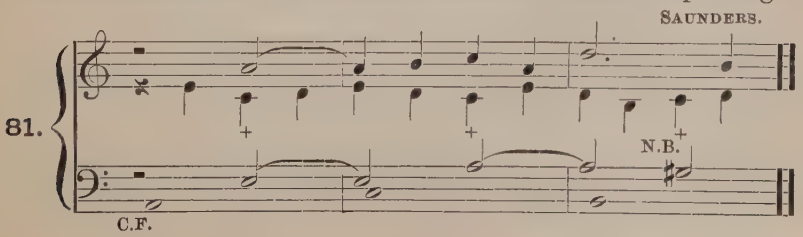
When the voices are moving in any species other than the first, the lowest moving voice is to be regarded (after the first beat of the measure) as the real Bass of the voice moving above it. For example: in three-voiced writing, suppose the Cantus in the Bass, the Second Species in the Tenor, and the Third Species in the Soprano. On the second half of each measure the Soprano must be written with reference to the Tenor as its real Bass. In Fig. 80*a*, *b*, if the Bass were omitted, the two upper parts would be correctly written for two-part Counterpoint, only it must be remembered that the interval of the fourth is allowed between upper parts just as before. Fig. 80*b*, first chord.



In this example at *a* the G and B are both dissonant with the Bass but are consonant with each other. So also at *b* the F and D are dissonant with the Bass.

All the notes struck at the same time must be consonant. In Fig. 81 in the first and second measures this rule is observed. The dissonance at N.B. in the third measure comes under the following:

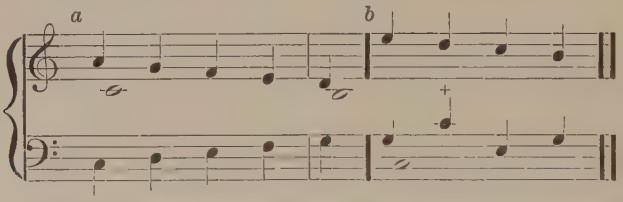
If two voices are moving in **contrary motion by degrees** they may take dissonant tones. The student should not abuse this privilege.



We may write two moving parts in contrary motion by degrees until they reach a consonance. Fig. 82*a*.

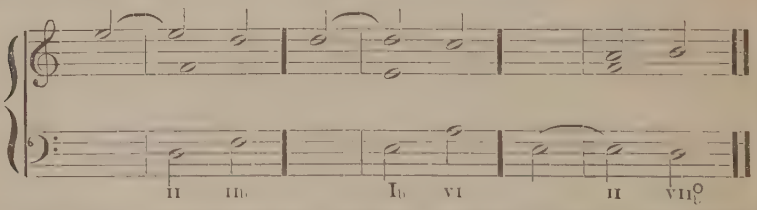
When writing two moving parts one part may take Harmony tones by leaps while the other part takes passing tones by degrees. But the part that moves by skips must not leap to a tone which is dissonant with the passing tone. In Fig. 82*b* the second note is wrong while the fourth is right.

82.



When writing a Counterpoint of the Fourth Species in an upper voice against a Counterpoint of the second Species in the Bass, it frequently happens that although the dissonance resolves regularly down one degree the resolution chord may be changed by the motion of the Bass. This is entirely correct.

83.

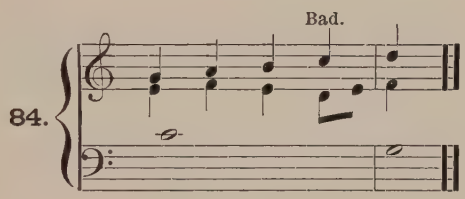


In combining the different Species, especially when the Fifth Species is used, it is always best that there be motion somewhere all the time. For instance, when the Fifth Species is written against itself or against other species, if one voice has a long note some other voice should have at the same time short notes. But we must avoid constant motion in all the parts.

When the Fifth Species is combined with others we may use a dotted half note at the beginning of the measure and even a dotted quarter on the third quarter of the measure. It is also possible to introduce a whole note at times, especially if it is tied to the following note.

When Species are combined, a change of harmony within the measure is of very frequent occurrence and no attempt need be made to avoid it.

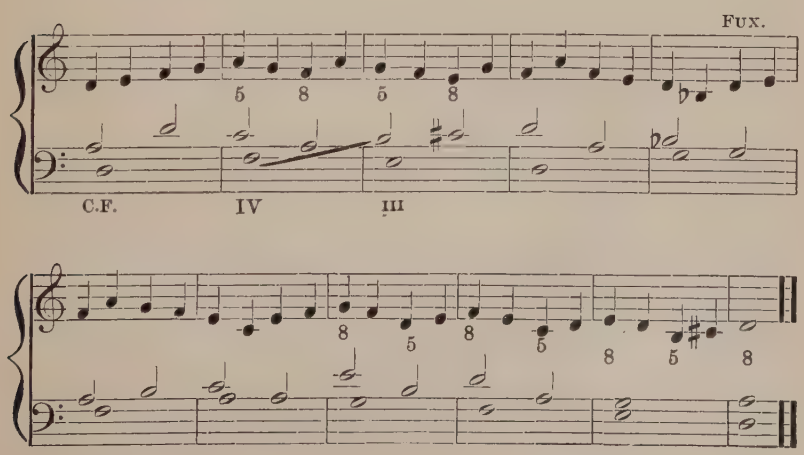
If an eighth note is used against a quarter, it should be consonant with it. Fig. 84.

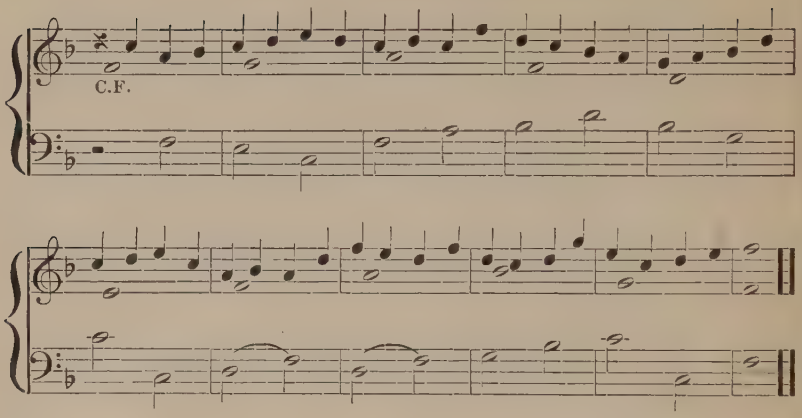


The following are models of Counterpoints in three and four parts, the various species being combined in different ways.

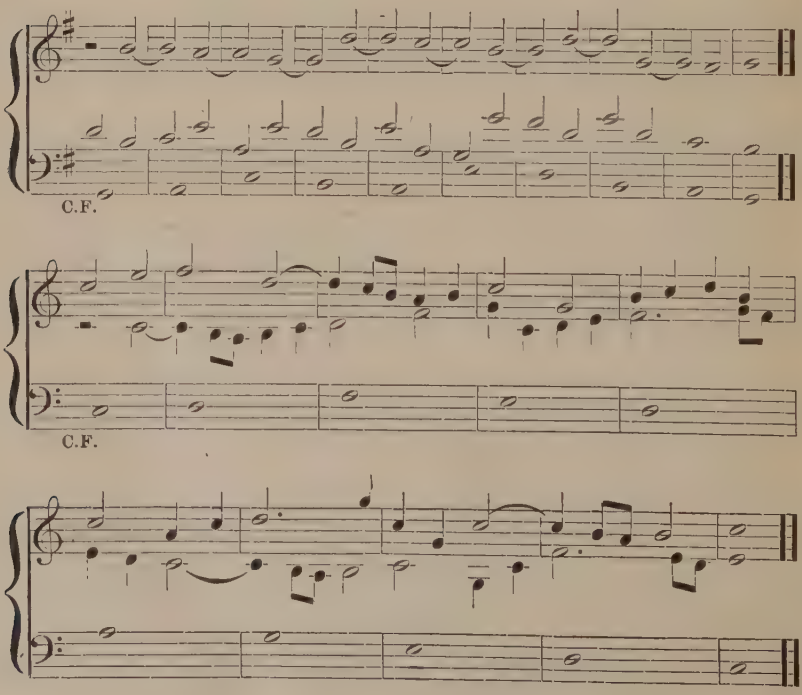
The student should write a large number of exercises combining the different species in both three and four voices. He should also review carefully the rules for writing each Species before writing any given combination.

The following though written by an acknowledged authority is far from being a model.





The absence of passing tones in the Bass, and the repeated figure, measures 7–8, are defects.



SAUNDERS.

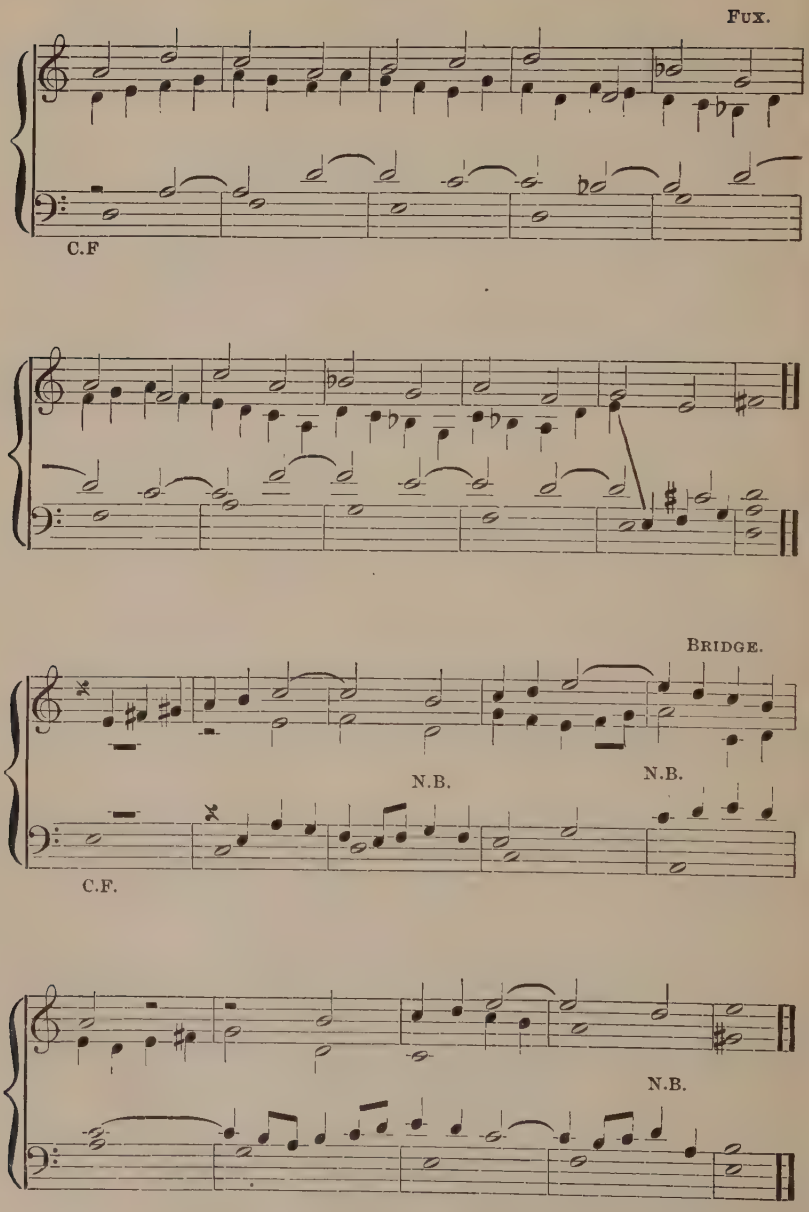
C.F.

N.B.

CHERUBINI.

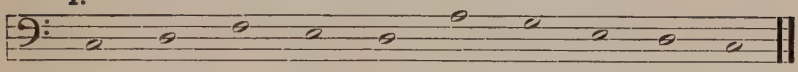
C.F.

The student should not imitate the crossing of the Bass by the Tenor.


FUX.
C.F
BRIDGE.
N.B.
N.B.
C.F.
N.B.

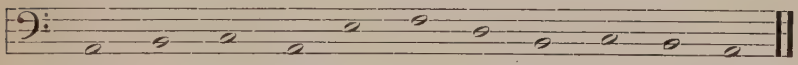
CANTUS FIRMI FOR EXERCISES.

1.



2.

3.



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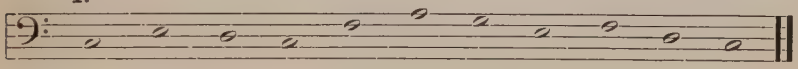

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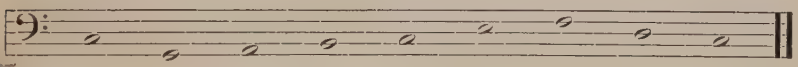

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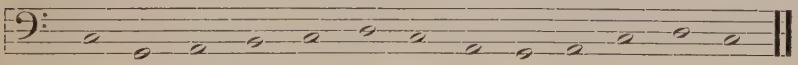

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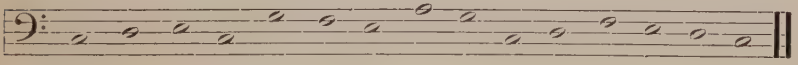

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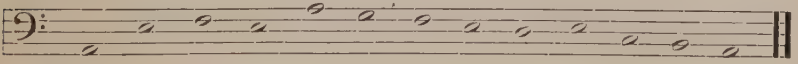

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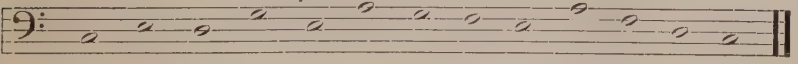

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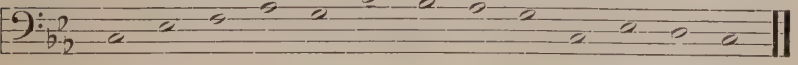

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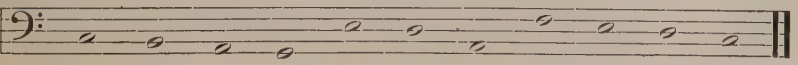

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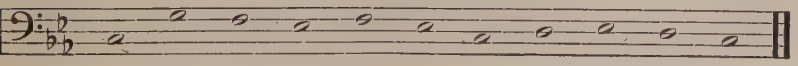

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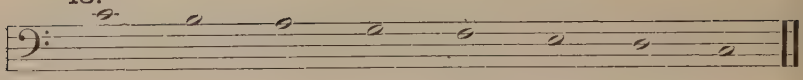

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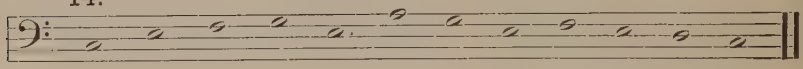

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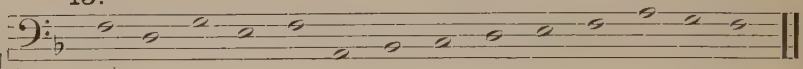

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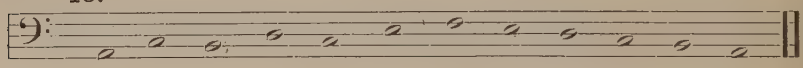

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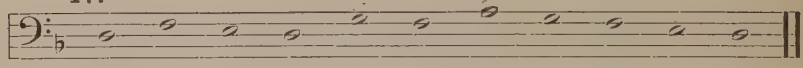

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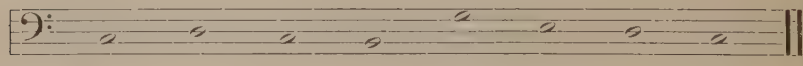

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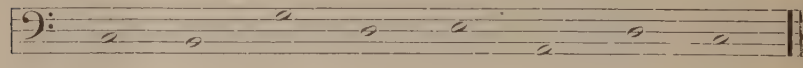

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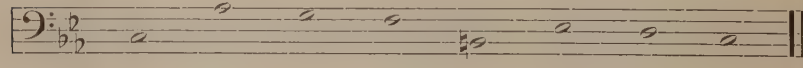

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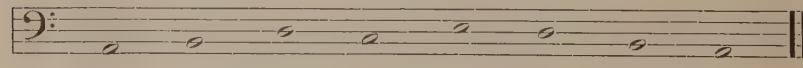

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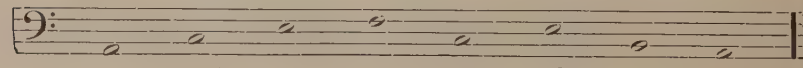

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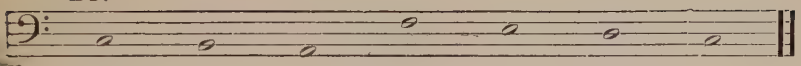

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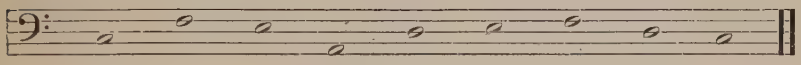

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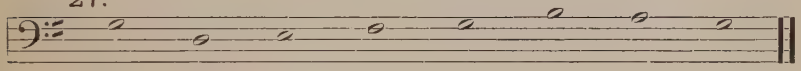

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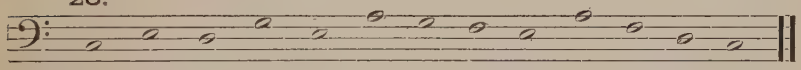

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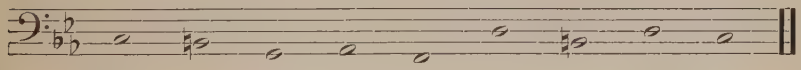

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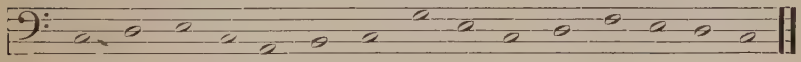

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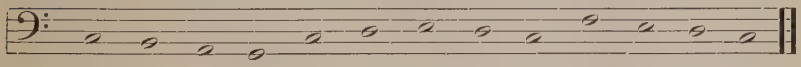

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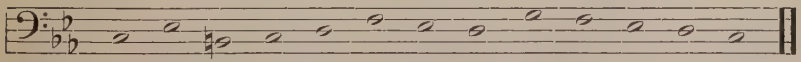

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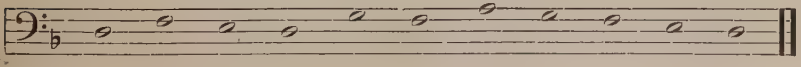


CHAPTER XV.

FREE COUNTERPOINT.

Up to this point we have studied the style of Counterpoint usually called Strict Counterpoint. It has also been variously called Ancient Counterpoint, Pre-harmonic Counterpoint, and Students' Counterpoint. These names are given it to distinguish it from that style of Counterpoint called Free, Modern, Post-harmonic or Composers' Counterpoint.

Broadly speaking, Strict Counterpoint was the only kind of composition known and practiced until about the year 1600. From that time until the present, the development of the art of composition and especially the growing importance of Harmony gradually produced a complete change in the point of view of musical composers. Thus far, following the historical order, we have studied Counterpoint exclusively from a **melodic** standpoint; references to chords and to chord progressions have been rare and the chords used have been of the simplest construction; dissonances have been allowed only as passing tones and as suspensions. In Modern or Free Counterpoint, on the other hand, any chord used in Harmony is available for use, dissonances enter without preparation, and are used with irregular and with interrupted resolutions; chord progression determines to a great extent the voice progression. The student, however, must remember that he is still studying Counterpoint. The development of Harmony has given us new material for use and given us much greater freedom, but we are still building melodies on melodies and not, as in the study of Harmony, studying chord progressions as such, or the harmonization of a single melody.

All the rules of Harmony that regard progression of voices, such as the rules regarding consecutive fifths and octaves, passing tones, the preparation and resolution of suspensions, etc., are in reality rules of Counterpoint.

Free Counterpoint may, of course, be written in any number of parts, but great freedom as to omission or doubling of parts is allowed, the number of voices may be changed during the composition and the Counterpoint may change from one voice to another.

In the First Species of four-voiced Free Counterpoint we find little difference from the writing of Harmony in four parts, the chief difference being that we concern ourselves more with the movement of each voice; but it differs greatly from Strict Counterpoint since **all the chords** that were forbidden in Strict Counterpoint — with the exception of the VII°_{a}, the diminished chord on the leading tone — **are now available for use.** Thus the C-position chord, $\binom{6}{4}$ the chords with the augmented fifth, the chords of the seventh, ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth, chromatic and mixed chords are all allowed.

As in the study of Harmony we found that these chords are the exception and that they are much less frequently used, so in Free Counterpoint we find the same to be true, but to a greater extent for the following reason. Dissonant chords imply dissonant intervals, as augmented 2ds, 4ths, 5ths, diminished 5ths, 7ths, etc. Now dissonant intervals are exactly those that are least suited to smooth flowing melody, and so long as a smooth flowing melodic progression is our object, the use of these intervals and chords will be exceptional. Dissonant intervals, too, require a certain prescribed progression, but this very fact limits the freedom of the movement of the voices. Thus the use of dissonant chords tends to introduce unmelodic progressions and at the same time interferes with the movement of the voices. For these reasons it will be understood that although the dissonant chords may be used freely wherever there is a good opportunity, such opportunities are not of very common occurrence.

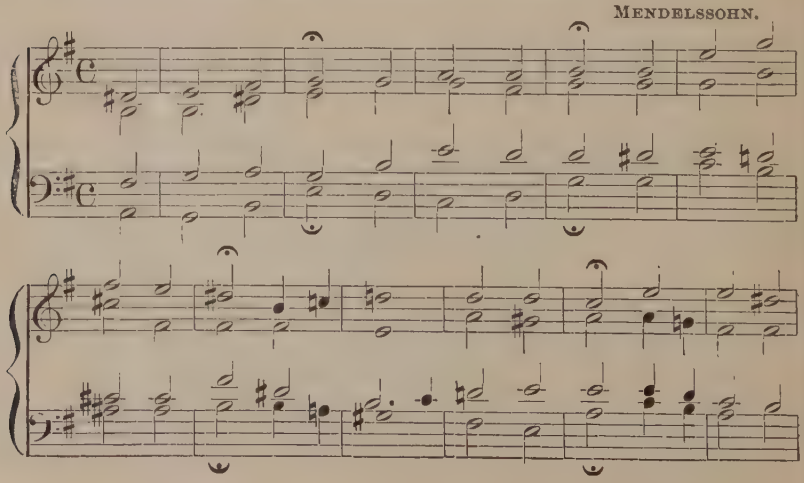
There is one very important exception to the above: **the V_7 chord** although forbidden in Strict Counterpoint, is used in Free Counterpoint with as great freedom as in Harmony, – in fact, it **is used practically as if it were a consonant chord.**

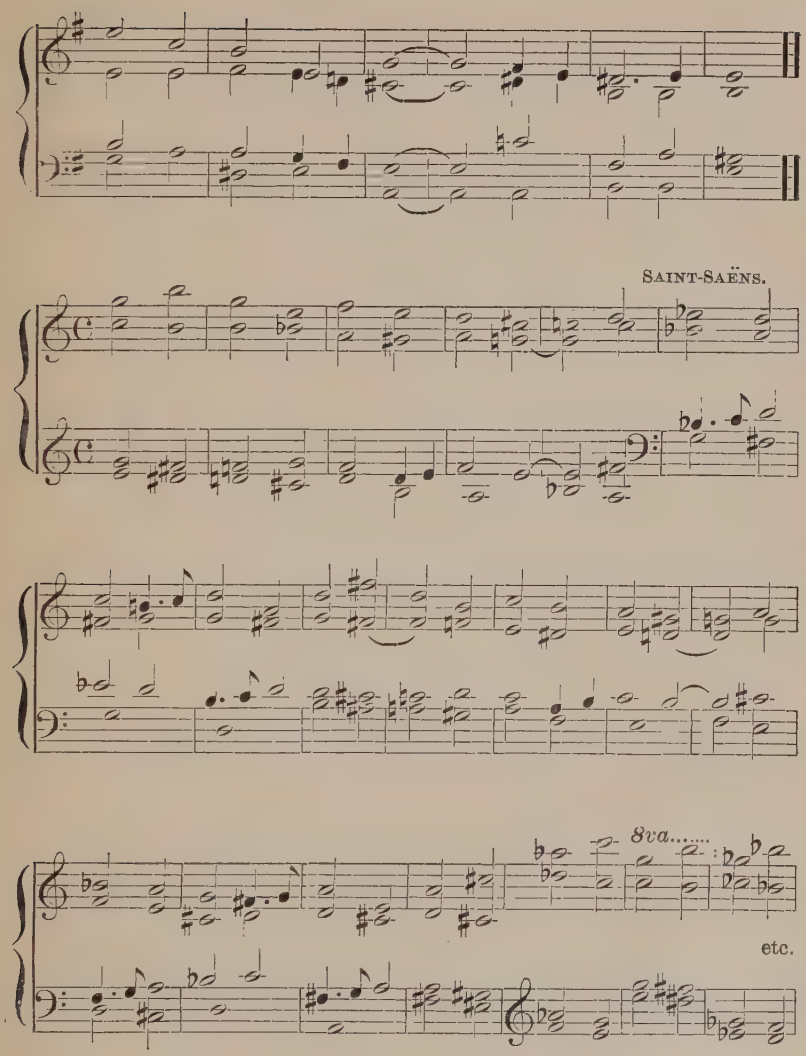
In Free Counterpoint, First Species, we shall also find that our liberty is somewhat less as to the possible progression of chords. In Strict Counterpoint, theoretically, any chord may go to any other. In Free Counterpoint, the feeling for harmonic progression is much stronger, and **the Natural or Normal Progression** of the chords — with the same liberties that were allowed in Harmony — **becomes the basis of our writing.**

One of the first rules in Harmony, namely, that tones common to two chords should remain in the same voice, does not hold in Free Counterpoint. Except when a chord is repeated, **a tone that is common to two chords should,** if possible, **be taken by different voices.**

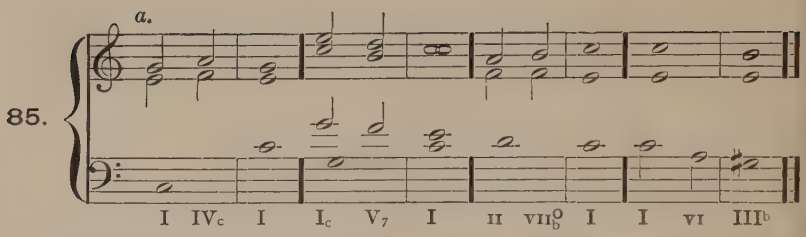
Let the student now refer to page 101 and compare the examples there given with the following. He will notice in each the same care in the movement of the voices, but much greater freedom as to the chords used in the examples of Free Counterpoint than in the other. The illustration by Mendelssohn is for four **vocal** parts and is the better model for the student to follow. The one by Saint-Saëns is written for orchestra and is an extreme example of the use of dissonant chords, and chords foreign to the key. The few irregularities in voice progression, for example in measures 5–6, the student can readily explain for himself.

MENDELSSOHN.

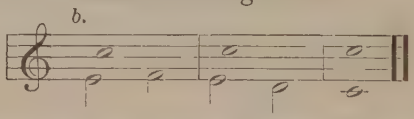




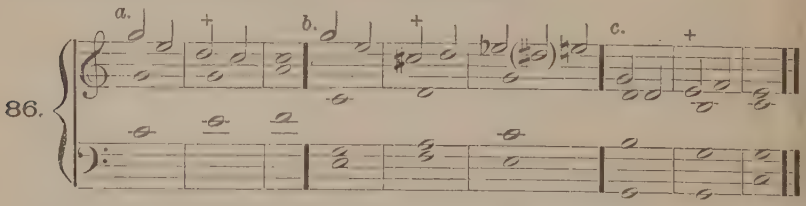
In the Second, as well as in the following Species, the prohibition of **more than one harmony in a measure** is largely removed. Progressions like the following are entirely correct:



The doubling of the third of a major chord, especially when the chord is in the b position ($\frac{6}{3}$) is to be more carefully avoided, and the doubling of the leading tone is strictly forbidden in less than five parts. Much more freedom is allowed in the repetition of notes, and such repetition (as we shall see in the Fourth Species), is at times even desirable. The following is good: also the second and third measure of Fig. 86*a*.

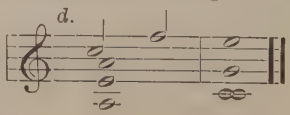


It is also possible to use passing tones on the accented part of the measure instead of reserving them strictly for the weak beat as in Strict Counterpoint. As at *a*, Fig. 86.

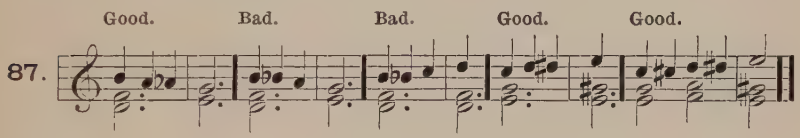


It is even possible to take the accented dissonance by a leap as at *b*, Fig. 86. In the use of chromatic dissonances as at *b*, Fig. 86, third measure, there is no effect of cross relation. Such progressions would not be tolerated for a moment in Strict Counterpoint.

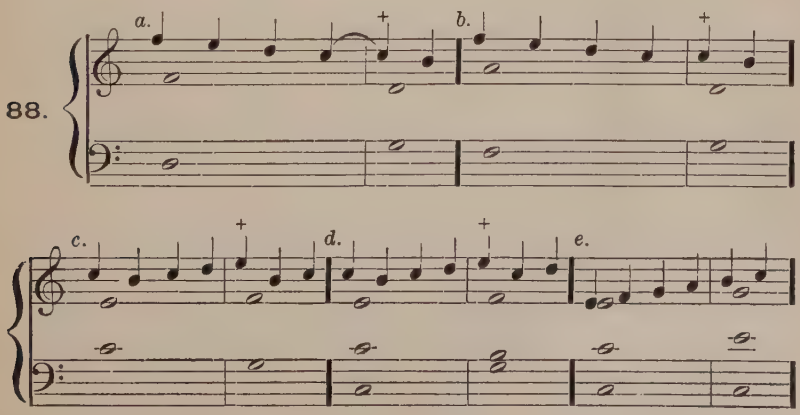
The dissonance on the unaccented beat may be taken by a leap, but, if so, it must be resolved by a step of a second. Fig. 86*d*.

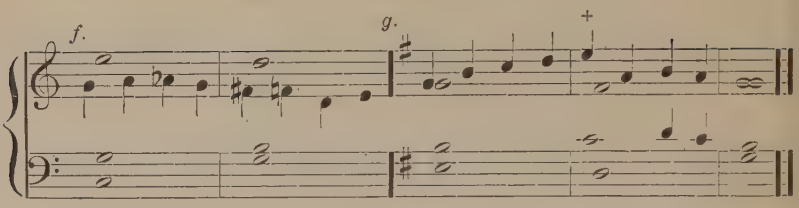


In the Third Species of Free Counterpoint the liberties allowed in the use of dissonant passing tones in the Second Species are still further increased. **Chromatic passing tones are used** freely; however, it is best after using a step of a minor second to progress onward in the same direction, and **after two consecutive minor seconds the part must proceed onward by minor seconds** until a harmony tone is reached. Thus:

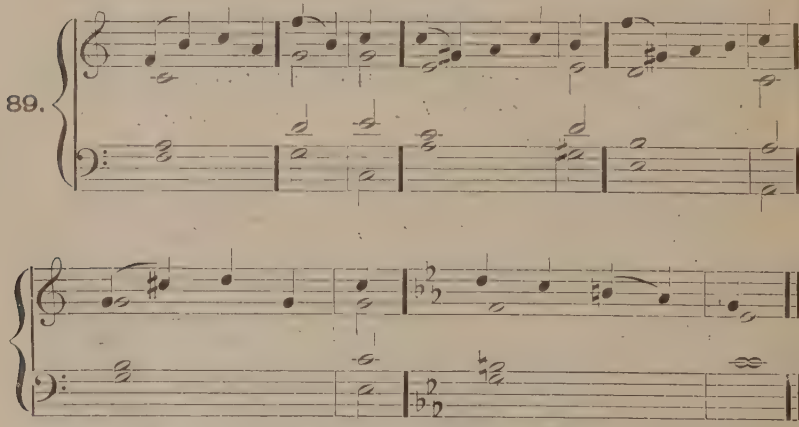


An accented dissonant tone may be prepared like a suspension. Fig. 88 (*a*). **It may be anticipated,** i. e., taken as a consonant tone and then struck again as a dissonance (*b*). **It may resolve** regularly **like a suspension** (*a*), or unlike that, **it may move to any tone of the following chord** (*c*). **It may leap to the tone above or below the note of resolution** before taking the latter (*d*). **It may appear with the note of resolution** provided it is at the interval of at least an octave (*e*). As the V_7 is here practically a consonant chord, **a dissonant tone may resolve to the seventh itself** (*f*) **or to some other tone of the V chord** the same as to a consonance (*g*). Compare Fig. 88*c*.





Augmented intervals **and diminished intervals** used melodically **are allowed** in Free Counterpoint, the augmented second and augmented fourth and the diminished fifth and diminished seventh being the most frequent. These intervals are more commonly found when they can be formed of tones that lie in the scale, either in the major scale (as augmented fourth and diminished fifth) or in the minor scale (as augmented second, diminished fourth and diminished seventh). When they occur as chromatic intervals the dissonant interval is usually brought about by the part leaping to a tone used as a dissonant passing tone or appoggiatura. Fig. 89.



The following may be used as a model in two-part writing, Second Species. The example, page 134 by Mendelssohn may be regarded as a model of four-part writing in the First Species.

BACH.

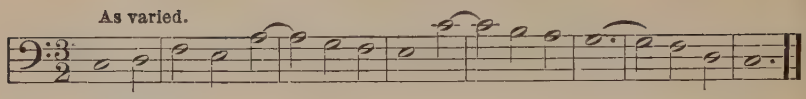
etc.

In writing in more than two parts it will be well for the student to place the Counterpoint now in one voice and now in another as in the following short illustration:

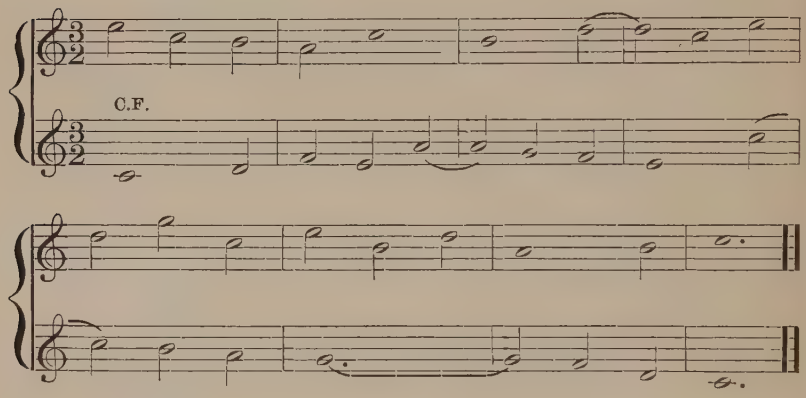
90. C.F.

It is also allowed to vary the Cantus rhythmically. The following illustrations from Richter show how a Cantus originally written entirely in whole notes may be varied rhythmically, thus giving rise to much more interesting Counterpoint.

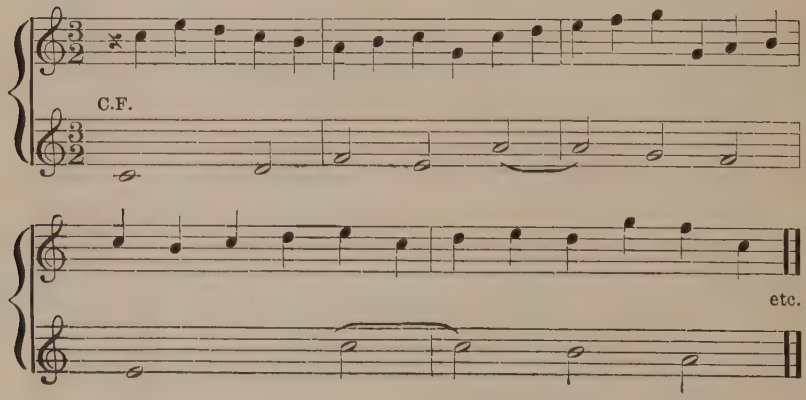
Original



In First, Second and Fourth Species, Two parts.



Third Species, Two parts.

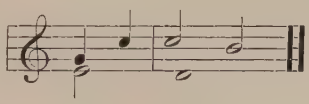


CHAPTER XVI.

FREE COUNTERPOINT CONTINUED.

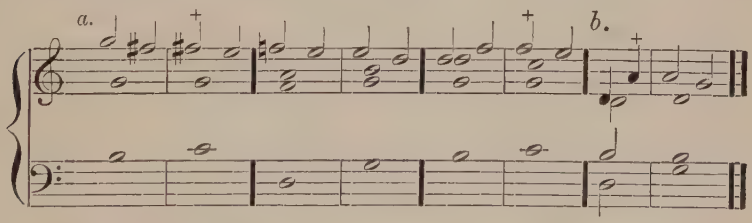
In the Fourth Species of Free Counterpoint, although the rule still holds good that forbids the preparation of a suspension by a note that is shorter than the dissonance, it is quite possible to evade this rule by simply repeating the note instead of tying it. Such use really belongs to the Fifth Species, but as the exception refers to the use of the suspension it is given here.

91.



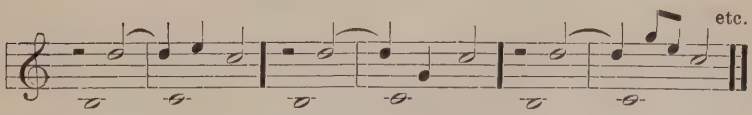
It is perfectly allowable in Free Counterpoint to prepare one dissonance by another, as for example, a passing tone. Fig. 92*a*, even taking the dissonance by a leap as at Fig. 92*b*.

92.



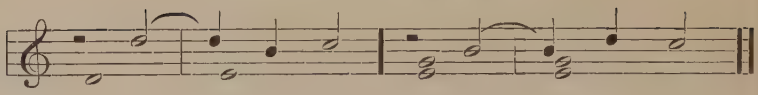
In resolving, the suspended dissonance may go to any tone of the chord first and then return to its proper resolution tone. Thus:

93.



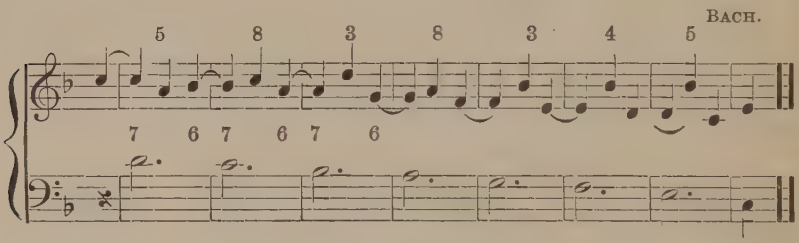
The suspended tone may also leap a third to the tone a second above or below the tone of resolution and then proceed to its proper resolution tone. Thus:

94.



This use also belongs rather to the Fifth Species than to the Fourth.

The following from Bach is a very instructive example of the use of irregular resolutions:

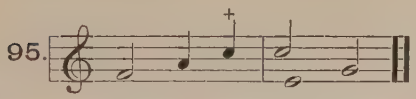


In the Fifth Species of Free Counterpoint we at last reach actual composition as practised by the great masters. To be sure, a knowledge of this sort of writing does not yet equip the student for the writing of a modern composition. For this the study of Double and Triple Counterpoint, Imitation, Canon, Fugue, Musical Forms and the treatment of accompanying voices is necessary. But he will find many phrases and even whole passages in classical compositions for the composing of which a knowledge of Free Counterpoint, Fifth Species, is ample.

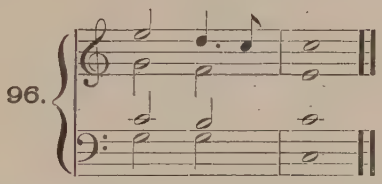
As the Fifth Species is but a combination of the other four species, the modifications of the rules of Strict Counterpoint already given cover nearly all the points necessary for writing Free Counterpoint of the Fifth Species.

The repetition of a complete chord, either consonant or dissonant, **is allowed,** not, of course, when variety is required, but for the sake of emphasis.

Similarly to the anticipation of a dissonance by a note of less value already spoken of, a **consonant note may be anticipated by a shorter note.** Thus:

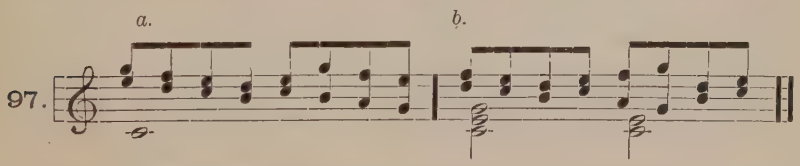


The anticipatory tone is also available for use. Thus:

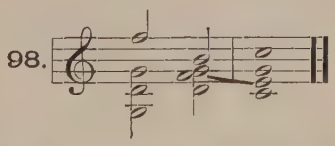


See also the ending of the example by Mendelssohn, page 134.

Two parts may proceed at the same time in passing notes by similar motion, a third or a sixth apart, and the former prohibition of more than three thirds or sixths no longer holds. Two parts may also take appoggiatura tones in a similar way. Fig. 97*a* and *b* shows examples of such passing and appoggiatura tones.



The use of discords makes it possible for the dissonant tone to move to some other tone of the chord, leaving to another voice the duty of resolving the dissonance. Such progressions would not be allowed in Strict Counterpoint. Fig. 98.

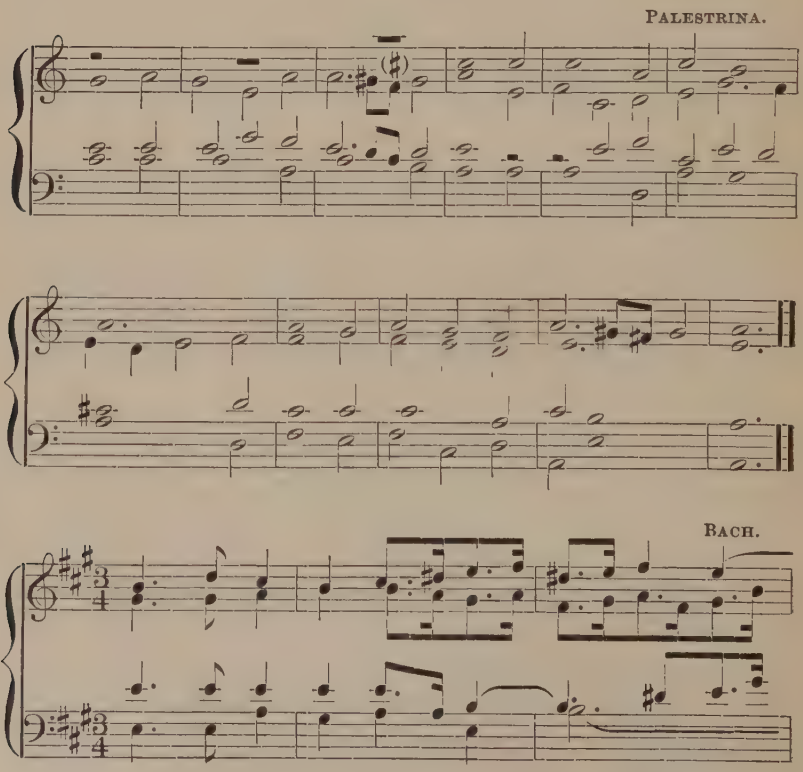


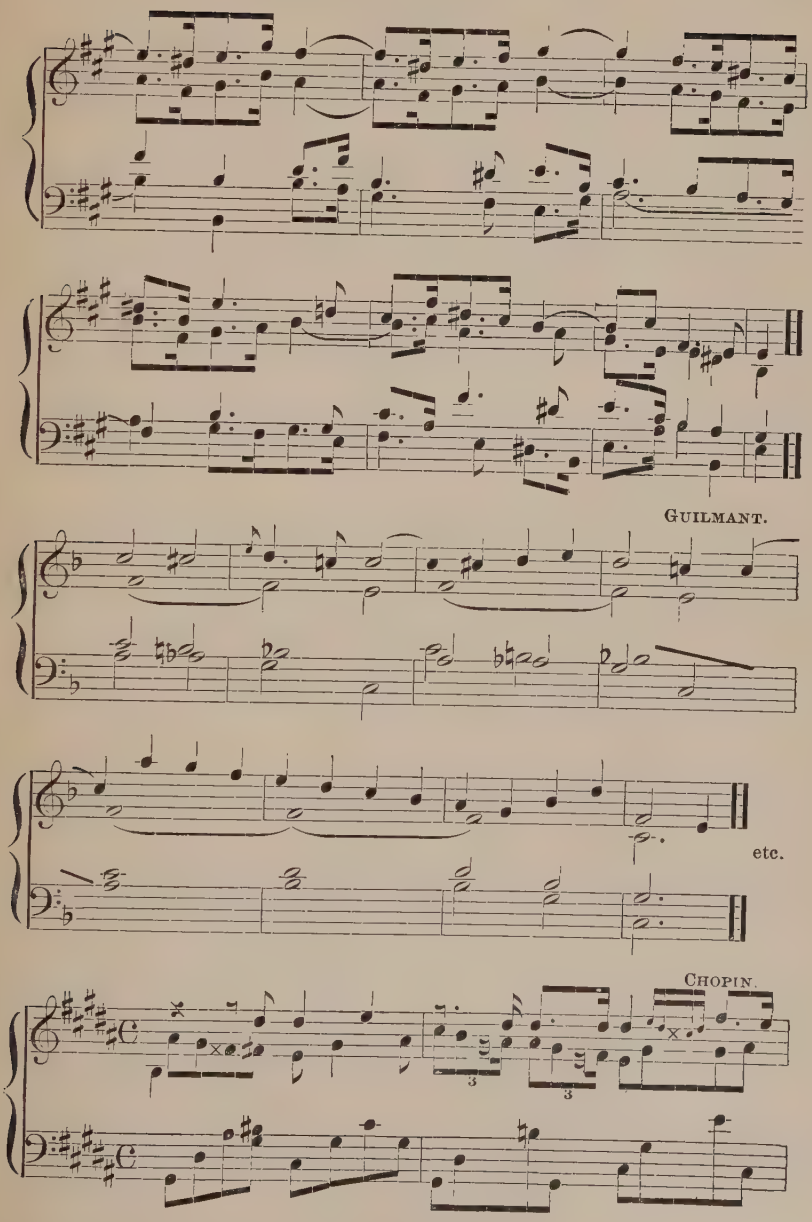
When a part moves continually through the tones of a chord, **arpeggio fashion, the result can not be called Counterpoint,** but if the chord tones are interspersed with non-harmonic tones the part approaches more nearly to the dignity of an independent voice instead of being merely an accompaniment. Whether we apply

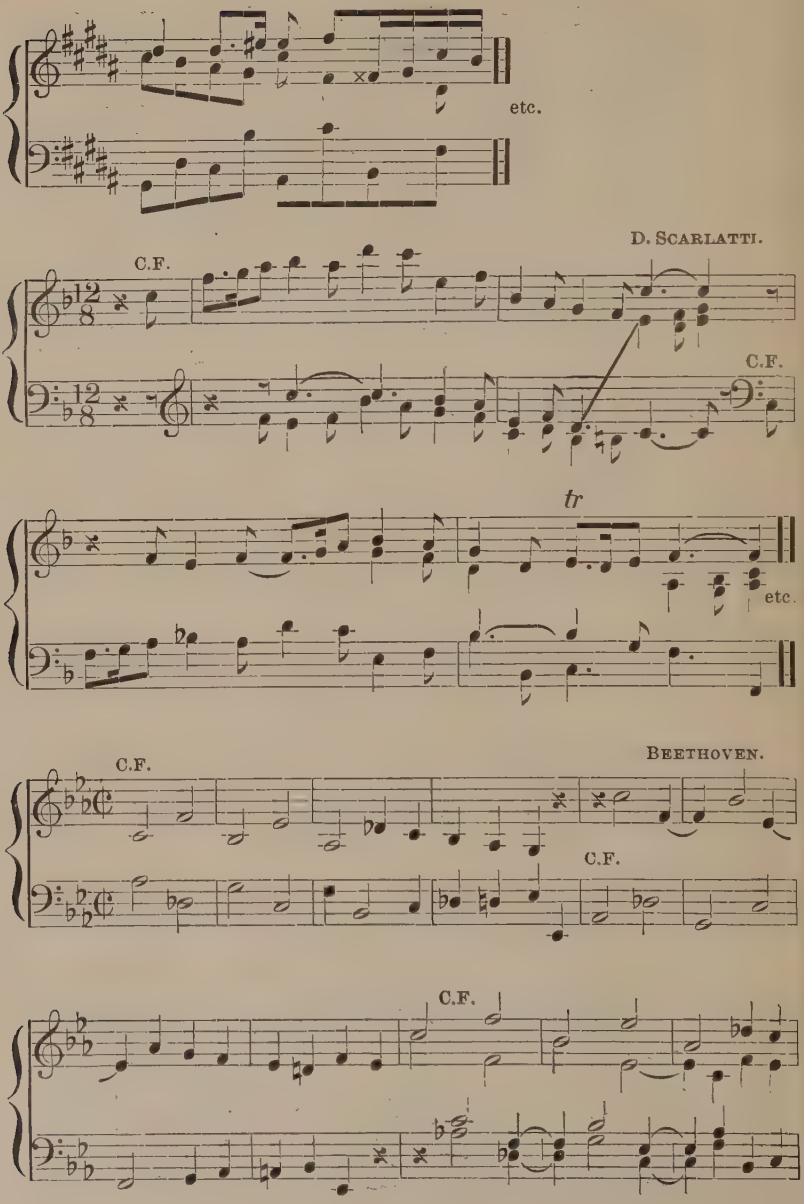
the rules of Harmony or of Counterpoint to such progressions will depend entirely on the degree of independence the voice assumes. The following rule may assist the student in determining such cases:

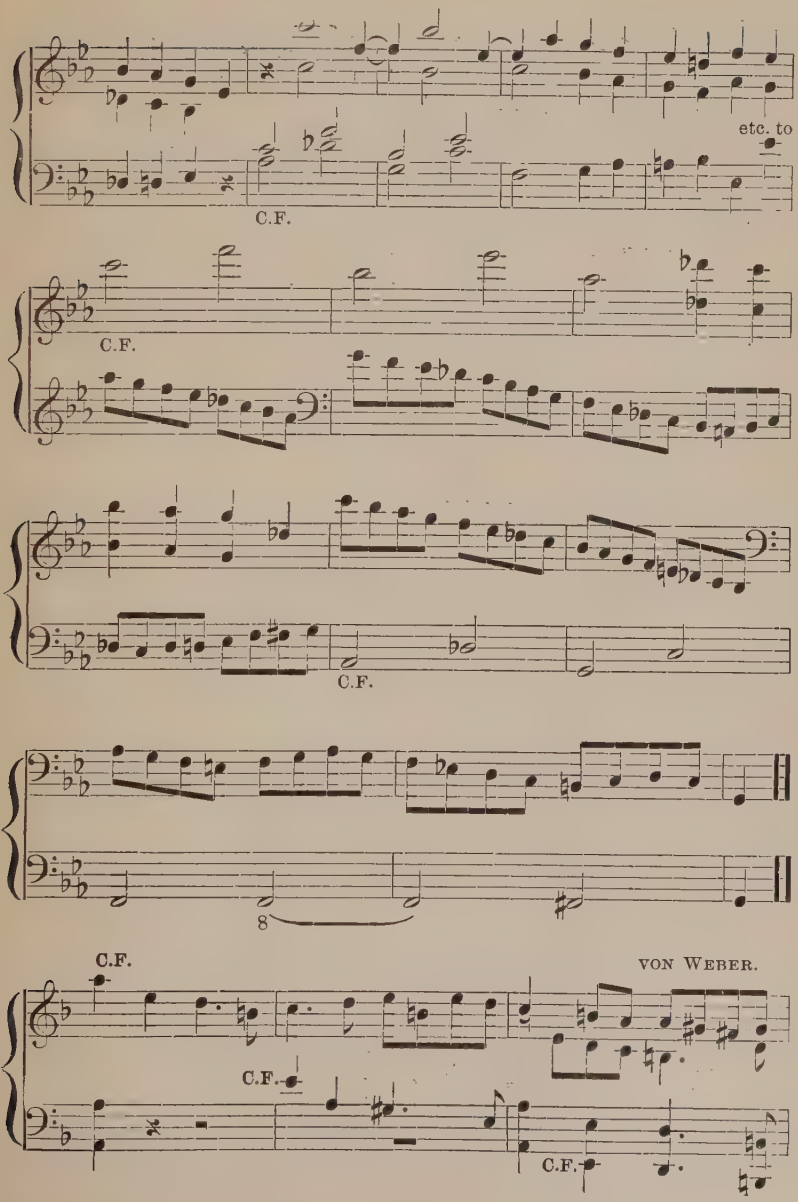
When several parts work together to produce one idea, the result is Harmony and **the rules of Harmony apply. When each of several parts conveys its own individual idea,** the result is Counterpoint, and **the rules of Counterpoint are to be observed.**

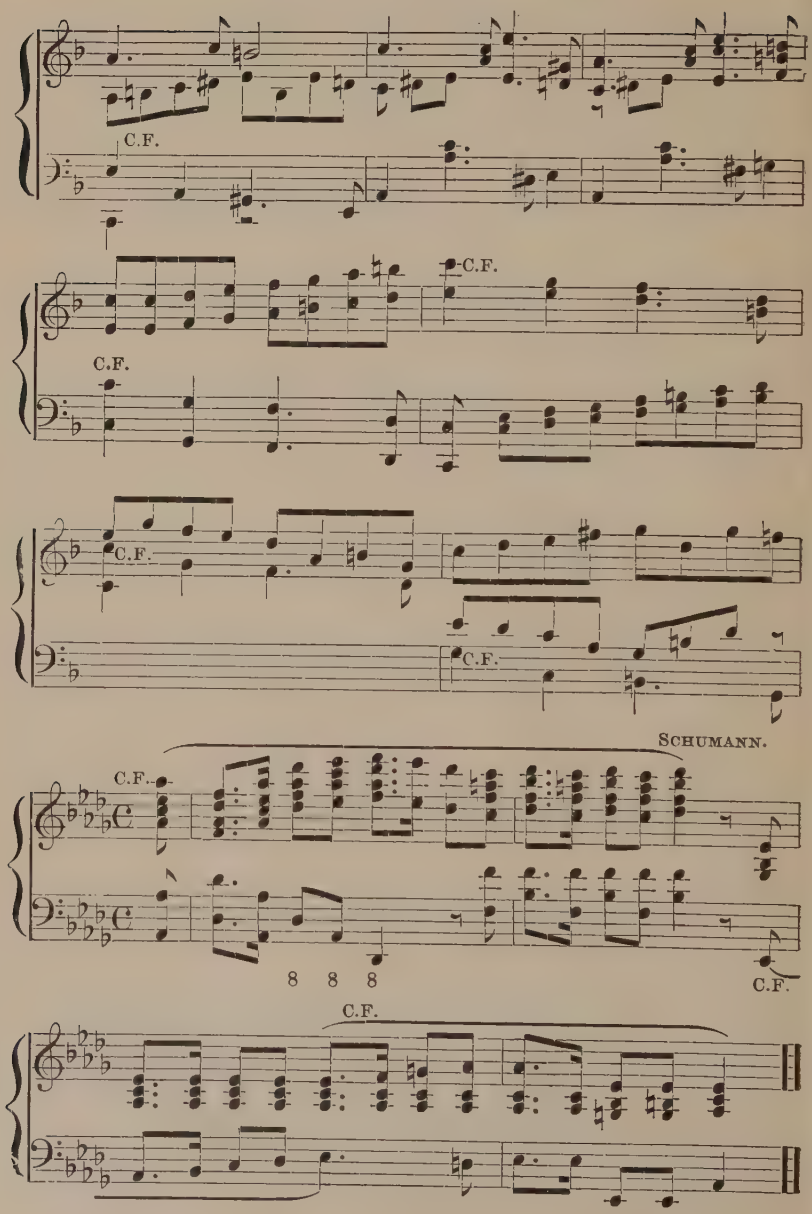
The student should write a large number of exercises in Free Counterpoint, Fourth and Fifth Species, especially in four parts. The following illustrates the methods used by different composers in weaving together melodies:




GUILMANT.
etc.
CHOPIN.


etc.
D. SCARLATTI.
C.F.
C.F.
tr
etc.
BEETHOVEN.
C.F.
C.F.
C.F.


etc. to
C.F.
C.F.
C.F.
8
C.F.
VON WEBER.
C.F.
C.F.


C.F.
C.F.
C.F.
C.F.
C.F.
C.F.
SCHUMANN.
C.F.
8 8 8
C.F.
C.F.

The example by Beethoven shows various treatments of a Cantus. First we have the Cantus in the upper part with Counterpoint mostly in First Species in the lower part. Then the Cantus is changed over to the lower part while the Counterpoint is above, first in the Fourth Species, then in the First, though in quarter notes. Next the Cantus is in the upper voice, but two new voices appear, making a Counterpoint in the Fourth Species. Next we have the Cantus lowest, the Tenor in Counterpoint of the First Species with it, the two upper voices in Fourth Species. In the next part we go back to two voices again, having the Counterpoint in the Third Species first below, and then above. It will be noticed that the Cantus is slightlv changed when it is used in the lower voice.

APPENDIX.

In the foregoing chapters the Tonic Sol-Fa syllables have been used to a very limited extent. It is believed that their use facilitates clear thinking. Each syllable represents a distinct musical idea that can not so well be represented by any other name. Thus Doh means the Tonic tone of the major scale, the tone from which all other tones proceed, around which they circle and to which they return. "Tonic" means the chord based on the first tone of the scale. "C" means a certain number of vibrations per second. "First of the scale" may mean either Doh or Lah, or possibly if the old modes be used, any tone of the scale. "Second," "Third," etc., mean intervals. "One," "Two," "Three" etc., are ambiguous in the same way as "First" or "Second of the scale." The following table may be of assistance:

Te	in the key of C is	B.	
Lah	" " " " " "	A.	A♯ is Le.
Soh	" " " " " "	G.	G♯ is Se.
Fah	" " " " " "	F.	F♯ is Fe.
Me	" " " " " "	E.	
Ray	" " " " " "	D.	D♯ is Re.
Doh	" " " " " "	C.	C♯ is De.

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^{b}D V$_7$-I D V$_7$-I

C I-^{b}VI C I-VI

^{b}E ^{b}IV-I$_c$-V$_7$-I E IV-I$_c$-V$_7$-I

C I-VI-II-II$^{\#}$

G V-I

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